

U.S. ARMY SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY (ANCOC)

T427

OCT 03

STRESS MANAGEMENT

TRAINING SUPPORT PACKAGE



TRAINING SUPPORT PACKAGE (TSP)

TSP Number / Title	T427 / STRESS MANAGEMENT
Effective Date	01 Oct 2003
Supersedes TSP(s) / Lesson(s)	P402, Stress Management, OCT 02
TSP Users	600-ANCOC-TATS Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course
Proponent	The proponent for this document is the Sergeants Major Academy.
Improvement Comments	<p>Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028, <i>Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms</i>. Completed forms, or equivalent response, will be mailed or attached to electronic e-mail and transmitted to:</p> <p>COMDT USASMA ATTN ATSS DCA BLDG 11291 BIGGS FIELD FORT BLISS TX 79918-8002</p> <p>Telephone (Comm) (915) 568-8875 Telephone (DSN) 978-8875 E-mail atss-dcd@bliss.army.mil</p>
Security Clearance / Access	Unclassified
Foreign Disclosure Restrictions	FD5. This product/publication has been reviewed by the product developers in coordination with the USASMA foreign disclosure authority. This product is releasable to students from all requesting foreign countries without restrictions.

PREFACE

Purpose

This Training Support Package provides the instructor with a standardized lesson plan for presenting instruction for:

Task Number

Task Title

Individual

158-100-1285

Implement Measures to Reduce Combat Stress.

This TSP
Contains

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STRESS MANAGEMENT
T427 / Version 1
01 Oct 2003

SECTION I. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

All Courses Including This Lesson	<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Version</u>	<u>Course Title</u>
	600-ANCOC	1	Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Task(s) Taught(*) or Supported	<u>Task Number</u>	<u>Task Title</u>
	<u>Individual</u>	
	158-100-1285 (*)	Implement Measures to Reduce Combat Stress.

Reinforced Task(s)	<u>Task Number</u>	<u>Task Title</u>
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Academic Hours	The academic hours required to teach this lesson are as follows:	
		<u>Resident Hours/Methods</u>
		2 hrs / Conference / Discussion
	Test	0 hrs
	Test Review	0 hrs
	Total Hours:	2 hrs

Test Lesson Number	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Lesson No.</u>
	Testing (to include test review)	4 E403

Prerequisite Lesson(s)	<u>Lesson Number</u>	<u>Lesson Title</u>
	None	

Clearance Access	Security Level: Unclassified Requirements: There are no clearance or access requirements for the lesson.
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Foreign Disclosure Restrictions	FD5. This product/publication has been reviewed by the product developers in coordination with the USASMA foreign disclosure authority. This product is releasable to students from all requesting foreign countries without restrictions.
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References	<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>
	DA PAM 600-63-10	STRESS MANAGEMENT	01 Sep 1987	
	FM 22-51	LEADER'S MANUAL FOR COMBAT STRESS CONTROL	29 Sep 1994	

Student Study Assignments	None
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Instructor Requirements	1:16, SFC, ANCOC graduate, ITC and SGITC qualified.
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Additional Support Personnel Requirements	<u>Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Man Hours</u>		
	None					
Equipment Required for Instruction	<u>ID Name</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Exp</u>
	559359 SCREEN PROJECTION	1:16		Y	1	N
	5820-00-T81-6161 VCR	1:16		Y	1	N
	673000T101700 PROJECTOR, OVERHEAD, 3M	1:16		Y	1	N
	702101T134520 DELL CPU, MONITOR, MOUSE, KEYBOARD	1:16		Y	1	N
	703500T102257 DESKTOP/EPSON PRINTER	1:16		Y	1	N
	7110-00-T81-1805 DRY ERASE BOARD	1:16		Y	1	N
	7510-01-424-4867 EASEL, (STAND ALONE) WITH PAPER	1:16		Y	1	N
	SNV1240262544393 36 - INCH COLOR MONITOR W/REMOTE CONTROL AND LUXOR STAND	1:16		Y	1	N
	SOFTWARE-1 MS-DOS, LATEST GOVERNMENT APPROVED VERSION	1:16		Y	1	N
	SOFTWARE-2 WINDOWS XP, LATEST GOVERNMENT APPROVED VERSION	1:16		Y	1	N
Materials Required	Instructor Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VGTs-12 • TSP Student Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils or pens. • Writing paper. • Student Handouts 1, 2, and 3 					
Classroom, Training Area, and Range Requirements	CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION 900 SF, 16 PN or Classroom Conducive to Small Group Instruction of 16 Students.					
Ammunition Requirements	<u>Id</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Exp</u>	<u>Stu Ratio</u>	<u>Instr Ratio</u>	<u>Spt Qty</u>
	None					

**Instructional
Guidance**

NOTE: Before presenting this lesson, instructors must thoroughly prepare by studying this lesson and identified reference material.

Before class--

- Issue all materials NLT three days prior to class.
- Read all TSP material.

During class--

- Facilitate group process IAW this TSP.

After class--

- Report any lesson discrepancies to the Senior Instructor.
 - Conduct an after action review for the lesson.
-

**Proponent
Lesson Plan
Approvals**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>
Stephens, Frederick	CIV	Training Specialist	
Eichman, Guy A.	MSG	Chief, BNCOC/ANCOC	
Lawson, Brian H.	SGM	Chief, NCOES	
Mays, Albert J.	SGM	Chief, CDDD	

SECTION II. INTRODUCTION

Method of Instruction: <u>Conference / Discussion</u>
Technique of Delivery: <u>Small Group Instruction (SGI)</u>
Instructor to Student Ratio is: <u>1:16</u>
Time of Instruction: <u>5 mins</u>
Media: <u>None</u>

Motivator

Do you ever feel like you just can't stand to see another private? Does your family walk on tiptoes when you come through the door? Are you suffering from the effects of stress? This lesson provides you information to help you manage stress in your life and the lives of those in your charge. It will cover peacetime as well as wartime situations. Reducing the negative impact of stress will lead to an improved quality of life for both you and your soldiers.

Stress is how the body and mind responds to different demands, real or perceived, from the environment or from within. Many demands produce stress: threats, job requirements, illness, and family problems are demands which commonly stimulate a stress reaction in the body. Conversely, joyous and beneficial events can also produce the same reactions. Stress is an individual phenomenon. What is stressful to one person may not be stressful to another.

"Bad stress," or distress, occurs when stress becomes too intense, prolonged or frustrating. It is important that persons are able to identify early signs of distress and are able to adjust to them. Stress may result in physical problems such as headaches, fatigue, high blood pressure, ulcers, low back pain, and heart disease. Self-inflicted violence is a growing problem for adolescent, young soldiers and family members. Poor coping skills and stressful work and home environments are definitely contributors to this problem area. Most of us can do something about stress by first identifying what stressors are in our lives. Following identification of a stressor, a successful strategy to combat it is often easier, and within reach.

Terminal Learning Objective

NOTE: Inform the students of the following Terminal Learning Objective requirements.

At the completion of this lesson, you [the student] will:

Action:	Recognize how leader actions can control stress in a platoon.
Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to FM 22-51 and DA Pam 600-63-10.
Standards:	Identified and recognized measures to reduce stress to a manageable level in peacetime and wartime in a platoon IAW FM 22-51 and DA Pam 600-63-10.

Safety Requirements

None

Risk Assessment Level

Low

Environmental Considerations

NOTE: It is the responsibility of all soldiers and DA civilians to protect the environment from damage.

None

Evaluation

You will take a 50-question written examination. The examination will include questions on the ELOs and TLO from this lesson. You must correctly answer 35 questions or more to receive a passing score (70 percent). This is a graduation requirement.

Instructional Lead-In

Leaders must understand the human dimension and anticipate soldier reactions to stress, especially to the tremendous stress of combat. The answer may look simple as you sit somewhere safe and read a manual, but be sure, easy answers don't come in combat. However, if you think about combat stress ahead of time and its effects on you and your soldiers, you can better prepare to deal with and reduce its effects. It takes mental discipline to imagine the unthinkable—the plan going wrong, your soldiers wounded or dying, and the enemy coming after you. But in combat all of these things can happen, and your soldiers expect you, their leader, to have thought through each of these things.

SECTION III. PRESENTATION

NOTE: Inform the students of the Enabling Learning Objective requirements.

A. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Identify the importance of combat stress control.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to FM 22-51.
STANDARDS:	Identified the potential effects and responsibilities of combat stress control IAW FM 22-51.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Identify the importance of combat stress control.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: VGT-1 and VGT-2

Controlling combat stress is often the deciding factor--the difference between victory and defeat--in all forms of human conflict. Stressors are a fact of combat, and soldiers must face them. Controlled combat stress can call forth stress reactions of loyalty, selflessness, and heroism. Conversely, uncontrolled combat stress causes erratic or harmful behavior that disrupts or interferes with accomplishment of the unit mission. Uncontrolled combat stress can impair mission performance and may bring disgrace, disaster, and defeat. The art of war aims to impose so much stress on the enemy soldiers that they lose their will to fight. Both sides try to do this and at times accept severe stress themselves in order to inflict greater stress on the enemy.

To win, you must control combat stress. The word "control" is better than the word "management" to emphasize the active steps which leaders, supporting personnel, and individual soldiers must take to keep stress within the acceptable range. This does not mean that control and management are mutually exclusive terms. Management is, by definition, the exercise of control. Within common usage, however, and especially within Army usage, management has the connotation of being a somewhat detached, number-driven, higher echelon process rather than a direct, inspirational, leadership process. Stress is the body's and mind's process for

dealing with uncertain change and danger. Elimination of stress is both impossible and undesirable in either the Army's combat or peacetime missions.

QUESTION: What are the objectives of stress control?

NOTE: Allow the students to discuss their answers and then provide the following answer.

ANSWER:

- (1) To keep stress within acceptable limits for mission performance and to achieve the ideal (optimal) level of stress when feasible.
- (2) To return stress to acceptable limits when it becomes temporarily disruptive.
- (3) To progressively increase tolerance to stress so that soldiers can endure and function under the extreme stress which is unavoidable in combat.

Ref: FM 22-51(pp SH-2-2 and SH-2-3)

QUESTION: What are combat stressors?


NOTE: Allow the students to discuss their answers and then provide the following answer.

ANSWER: Any stressors occurring during the course of combat-related duties, whether due to enemy actions or other sources.


Ref: FM 22-51 (p SH-2-20)

Stressors are often unfamiliar or create conflict among motives within you, the individual. They may pose a challenge or a threat to your well-being or self-esteem. These stressors can be positive or negative. An example of a positive stressor is a promotion to new responsibilities and a negative stressor is a threat of imminent death.

SHOW VGT-1, CONTROLLING STRESS



Controlling Stress




- Monitor the signs of stress and recognize when and if they change.
- Identify and monitor the causes of stress; that is, the stressors.
- Classify the stressors into those which can be controlled (increased, decreased, avoided, or otherwise changed) versus those which are uncontrollable.

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Ref: FM 22-51 (p SH-2-3)

REMOVE VGT 1

SHOW VGT 2, CONTROLLING STRESS Cont



Controlling Stress Cont



- Control those stressors it is possible to change by focusing the stress in the desired direction, either up or down.
- Help soldiers adapt to the stressors which are not possible to change.
- Learn (and teach) how to directly lower (or raise) the stress level within the individual soldier as needed, at specific times, in specific situations.

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Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: 22-51 (p SH-2-3)

REMOVE VGT 2

CHECK ON LEARNING: None

B. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

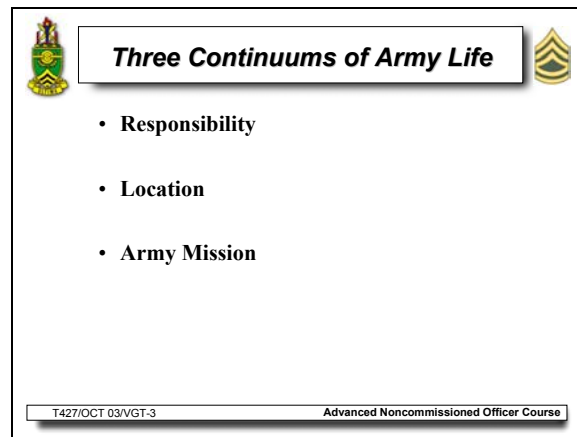
ACTION:	Identify the three continuums of Army life as it relates to combat stress.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to FM 22-51.
STANDARDS:	Identified responsibility, location, and Army mission as it relates to Army life and combat stress IAW FM 22-51.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Identify the three continuums of Army life as it relates to combat stress.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: VGT-3

Stress is a necessary and inevitable part of Army life, but this is not all bad. Eustress or “good” stress can help an individual to better prepare for action. Having some stress can keep us more alert and ready to respond in time of crisis. Army combat stress control activities must be a part of everything the Army does. Combat stress control must be a natural part of the three continuums of Army life.

SHOW VGT-3, THREE CONTINUUMS OF ARMY LIFE



Ref. FM 22-51 (pp SH-2-3 and SH-2-4)

Responsibility

Responsibility for combat stress control requires a continuous interaction that begins with every soldier and his buddies. It also involves the soldier's family members. The interaction continues through the small team's combat lifesaver when there is one and the combat medic. Stress control requires special involvement from direct small unit leaders. The responsibility extends up through the organizational leaders and their staffs, both officers and noncommissioned officers at all echelons.

Location

The location for combat stress control extends continuously from the site of battle, disaster, or rigorous duty through the unit's forward and rearward support areas to the communications zone (COMMZ), if present; from the Continental United States (CONUS) to the unit's home station and the rear detachment; and from the family support group to the Army hospitals and medical centers. Remember, if stress control is weak at any one location, this can cause stress and breakdown, not only there but elsewhere in other locations.

Army Missions

The Army operations that require combat stress control are all inclusive. They extend continuously from garrison maintenance activities to peacetime training exercises. This also includes operations other than war to war and the integrated battlefield.

The same basic stress control principles apply across the entire range of Army operations. Within our rapidly changing world, many Army units have had their missions shift across a wide range of operations in a matter of weeks, sometimes with little advance warning. Individual soldiers, family members, unit leaders and staffs, chaplains, and medics (including the mental health/combat stress control teams) must work together continuously. They must practice stress control against the frequent minor stressors and the occasional severe stressors of peacetime. This, and only this, enables them to be ready on short notice for the extreme stressors of war.

REMOVE VGT-3

CHECK ON LEARNING: None

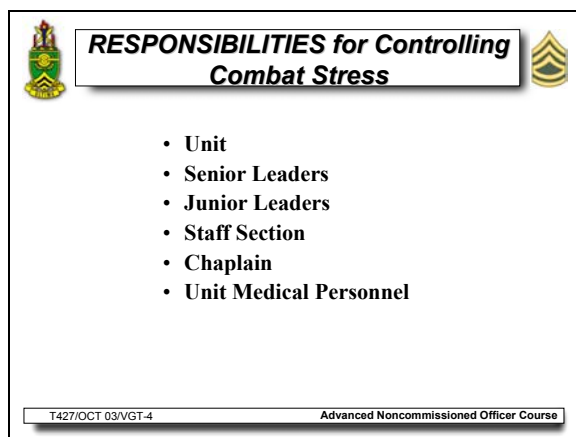
C. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Identify the responsibilities for controlling combat (conflict) stress.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to FM 22-51.
STANDARDS:	Identified the different individual responsibilities for controlling combat stress IAW FM 22-51.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Identify the responsibilities for controlling combat (conflict) stress.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: VGT-4

SHOW VGT-4, RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CONTROLLING COMBAT STRESS



Ref: FM 22-51 (pp SH-2-12 thru SH-2-16)

Unit

Developing rigorous, realistic training for war must go on continuously to assure unit readiness. Emphasis is on establishing and maintaining cohesive units. Unit training and activities must emphasize development of soldier skills. This development should focus on building trust and establishing effective communication throughout the unit.

The most important motive which keeps soldiers doing their duty in combat is "Unit Cohesion." Unit cohesion is the personal trust and loyalty among members of a small unit which makes them prefer to stick together even when that involves great hardship and danger. As a leader you need to encourage as much personal cohesion

as possible within the team before going into combat and use a sense of the unit's military identity and its mission to strengthen it. This sense is called "Esprit de Corps" or simply "esprit." The combination of unit esprit and personal cohesion equals unit cohesion. Unit cohesion is like reinforced concrete. Cohesion alone is like steel wire mesh; it is hard to break but easy to bend. The esprit is like concrete; it keeps its shape, but shatters easily. Combining the two produces a result that is far stronger than the sum of its parts. It neither breaks nor bends.

Senior (Organizational) Leaders' Responsibilities

The chain of command must ensure that the standards for military leadership are met. Senior leaders must provide the necessary information and resources to the junior leaders to control combat stress and to make stress work for the US Army and against the enemy.

NOTE: Have the students review the list of responsibilities in Student Handout 2, Table 1-2, Senior Leader's Responsibilities. Briefly go over the list and allow discussion from the class.

Junior (Direct) Leaders' Responsibilities

Junior leaders, and especially the NCOs, have the crucial business of applying the principles of stress control day-by-day, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute. These responsibilities overlap with senior leaders' responsibilities but include parts that are fundamentally "sergeants' business," supported by the officers.

NOTE: Have the students review the list of responsibilities in Student Handout 2, Table 1-3, Junior Leader's Responsibilities. Briefly go over the list and allow discussion from the class.

Staff Section Responsibilities

Each element of the commander's staff (adjutant, intelligence, operations, logistics, and civil and public affairs, if present) has its own area of responsibility that has particular relevance to stress control. For example, the adjutant's responsibility for mail and decorations is more than just "nice to have." These are important stress control measures. Morale, welfare, and recreation opportunities, and even the use of Army bands, are valuable ways to sustain morale and combat readiness.

NOTE: Have the students review the list of responsibilities in Student Handout 2, Table 1-4, Staff Section Responsibilities. Briefly go over the list and allow discussion from the class.

Chaplains' Responsibilities

Chaplains, especially those in unit ministry teams, have extremely important responsibilities. Soldiers' often base their inner resources on their religious and spiritual values. In combat, soldiers show more interest in their religious beliefs. The chaos of combat may challenge religious and spiritual values, and soldiers may lose sight of inner resources that sustain them. The soldiers then become targets of fear, despair, hopelessness, and eventually, battle fatigue casualties. They are also at risk for committing misconduct stress behaviors.

The unit ministry team is the primary resource available to soldiers experiencing these dilemmas and seeking to refocus their spiritual values. The unit ministry team's relationship with the unit promotes trust with the soldiers. Embedding the team in maneuver battalions enables it to respond readily to the needs of soldiers experiencing combat stress and battle fatigue. A person-oriented resource, the team gives religious support to battle fatigue casualties, especially soldiers having less severe difficulties who have rapid replenishment potential. The unit ministry team operates with a soldier-focused approach to religious support. The spiritual dimension the team brings to the soldier's situation is an essential element in the replenishment process. Religious support assists the soldier in achieving emotional and spiritual wholeness.

Unit Medical Personnel's Responsibilities

Unit medical personnel assist commanders and NCOs in the control of stressors. Headquarters staffs and unit chaplains and medical personnel also have other primary missions which must come first. Sustaining military performance, preventing stress casualties, and treating stress symptoms are the primary missions for Army combat stress control units and personnel.

REMOVE VGT-4

Break Time: 00:50 to 01:00

CHECK ON LEARNING: None

D. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Determine how stress can affect task performance.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to FM 22-51.
STANDARDS:	Determined the relationship of stress to task performance IAW FM 22-51.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Determine how stress can affect task performance.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: None

Stress is an internal process which presumably evolves because it helps the individual to function better, stay alive, and cope successfully with stressors. However, there is an optimal range of arousal or motivation or stress for any given task. If there is too little arousal, the job will be done haphazardly or not at all because distractions may arise, the individual makes errors of omission, or falls asleep. If arousal becomes too intense, the individual may be too distractible or too focused on one aspect of the task. He may have difficulty with fine motor coordination and with discriminating when and how to act. If the individual is unfamiliar with his own stress reflexes and perceives them as dangerous or incapacitating, or as a threat to self-esteem, the stress itself can become a stressor and magnify itself. With extreme arousal, the individual may freeze, become immobile or petrified by fear. Alternately, he may become agitated and flee in disoriented panic.

If stress persists too long, it can cause physical and mental illnesses. Extreme stress with hopelessness can even result in rapid death, either due to sympathetic nervous system over stimulation such as stroke or heart attack or due to sympathetic

nervous system shutdown. An individual giving up can literally stop the heart from beating.

The purpose of the stress reaction is to keep the person alive. The military utilizes the stress process to keep the soldier in that range of physiological, emotional, and cognitive mobilization which best enables him to accomplish the military mission, whether that contributes to individual survival or not. This optimal range of stress differs from task to task. An individual performs tasks which require heavy but gross muscular exertion best at high levels of arousal. However, tasks that require fine muscle coordination and clear thinking such as walking point on a booby-trapped jungle trail, or distinguishing subtle differences between friendly and enemy targets in a night-vision gun sight, or that require inhibiting action such as waiting alertly in ambush require a lower level of stress. If the stress process allows too much or too little arousal, or if arousal does not lessen when it is no longer needed, stress has become harmful.

During the first time in battle for soldiers, often their combat performance is usually lower than it was in precombat training. Novice soldiers are also at relatively high risk of being killed or wounded. This is partly because they have not yet learned to identify and respond automatically to the true dangers, such as the specific sounds of incoming artillery or mortar rounds. Under extreme stress, they may experience difficulty with focusing their attention and remembering what they were taught in training. Another cause of their ineffectiveness may be fear-induced fatigue. First-battle soldiers are at high risk of becoming battle fatigue casualties. Soldiers under fire for the first time are likely to experience high anxiety and stages of alarm. Providing tough, realistic training, especially battle drills under high stress, can reduce poor performance on first exposure to real battle.

The Army knows that airborne and air assault training are not just ways to teach the skills needed to arrive on a battlefield after jumping from a low-flying aircraft or repelling from a helicopter. Their greater value comes from requiring soldiers to

confront and master their extremely strong, instinctive fear of heights under circumstances which are deliberately stressful at the time. During training, this fear builds self-confidence and a sense of special identity on completion. In fact, the training itself is not exceedingly dangerous, statistically speaking. However, the possibility of death does exist if you are extremely unlucky or fail to do the task correctly. This can contribute to additional stress.

CHECK ON LEARNING: None

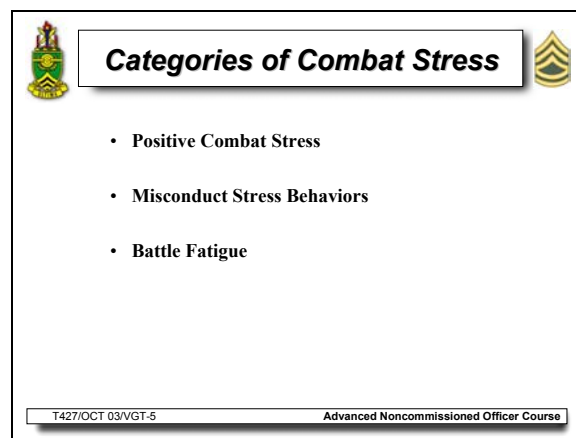
E. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Identify combat stress behaviors.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to FM 22-51.
STANDARDS:	Identified the four behaviors that relate to combat stress IAW FM 22-51.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Identify combat stress behaviors.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
 Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)
 Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
 Time of Instruction: 15 mins
 Media: VGT-5 and VGT-6

SHOW VGT- 5, CATEGORIES of COMBAT STRESS



Ref: FM-22-51 (pp SH-2-31 and SH-2-32)

There are three categories of combat stress: positive combat stress, misconduct stress behavior, and battle fatigue. Combat brings out the best and the worst in

human beings. The direction a combat stress behavior takes, positive or negative, results from the interaction of the physiological and social context in which the stress occurs and the physiologic stress response (preparing the body for fight or flight). The purpose of good military leadership, discipline, and training is to bring out the best while preventing the worst. Combat stress behavior is the generic term which covers the full range of behaviors in combat, from behaviors that are highly positive to those that are totally negative.

Positive Combat Stress Behaviors

Positive combat stress behaviors include the heightened alertness, strength, endurance, and tolerance to discomfort which the fight or flight stress response and the stage of resistance can produce when properly in tune. Examples of positive combat stress behaviors include the strong personal bonding between combat soldiers and the pride and self-identification which they develop with the combat unit's history and mission unit esprit. These together form unit cohesion--the binding force that keeps soldiers together and performing the mission in spite of danger and death. The ultimate positive combat stress behaviors are acts of extreme courage and action involving almost unbelievable strength. They may even involve deliberate self-sacrifice. Sound military training, wise personnel policies, and good leadership can bring forth positive combat stress behaviors. The results are behaviors which result in rewards ranging from praise to medals for individual valor and/or unit citations.

Misconduct Stress Behaviors

Misconduct stress behaviors are most likely to occur in units with poor morale or in units where problems exist. These range from minor breaches of unit orders or regulations to serious violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and perhaps the Law of Land Warfare. Misconduct stress behaviors are most likely to occur in poorly trained, undisciplined soldiers. However, good, even heroic soldiers, under extreme combat stress may exhibit this type of behavior. You can prevent misconduct stress behavior by stress control measures, but once serious misconduct

has occurs, punishment must be given to prevent further erosion of discipline.

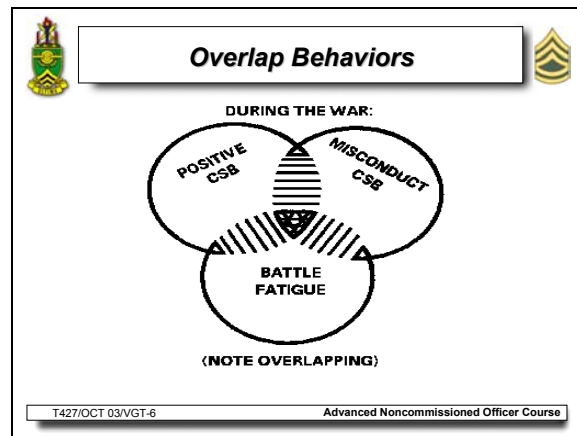
Combat stress, even with heroic combat performance, cannot justify criminal misconduct.

Battle Fatigue

Battle fatigue can also be present in soldiers who have been physically wounded or who have nonbattle injuries or diseases caused by stressors in the combat area. It may be necessary to treat both the battle fatigue and the other problems. Battle fatigue may coexist with misconduct stress behaviors. However, battle fatigue itself, by definition, does not warrant legal or disciplinary action. Several of our allies use other terms for battle fatigue such as combat reaction, combat stress reaction, battle shock, or combat fatigue. Another name for battle fatigue is combat stress reaction or combat fatigue. These battle fatigue behaviors may accompany excellent combat performance and are present in heroes, too. These are normal, common signs of battle fatigue. Table 2-2, p 2-33 in SH-2, lists symptoms in descending order to indicate progressively more serious warning signs. Warning signs deserve immediate attention by the leader, medic, or buddy to prevent potential harm to the soldier, others, or the mission. Relief from duty or evacuation of the soldier exhibiting battle fatigue warning signs may not be necessary if the soldier responds quickly to helping actions. However, soldiers may need evaluation at medical treatment facilities to rule out other physical or mental illness. If the symptoms of battle fatigue persist and make the soldier unable to perform duties reliably, then medical treatment facilities, such as clearing station and specialized combat stress control teams, can provide restorative treatment. At this point, the soldier is a battle fatigue casualty. For those cases, prompt treatment close to the soldier's unit provides the best potential for returning the soldier to duty.

REMOVE VGT- 5

SHOW VGT- 6, OVERLAP BEHAVIOR



Ref: FM-22-51 (p SH-2-34)

The distinction between positive combat stress behaviors, misconduct stress behaviors, and battle fatigue is not always clear. Indeed, the three categories of combat stress behaviors may overlap. Soldiers with battle fatigue may show misconduct stress behaviors and vice versa. Heroes who exemplify the positive combat stress behaviors may suffer symptoms of battle fatigue and may even be battle fatigue casualties before or after their heroic deeds. Excellent combat soldiers may commit misconduct stress behaviors in reaction to the stressors of combat before, during, or after their otherwise exemplary performance. Combat stress, even with good combat behavior, does not excuse criminal acts. However, leaders should take good combat behavior into account as an extenuating circumstance for minor (noncriminal) infractions or in determining nonjudicial punishment under Article 16, UCMJ, for minor offenses.

REMOVE VGT-6

CHECK ON LEARNING: None

F. ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE

ACTION:	Determine ways to reduce stress in the platoon.
CONDITIONS:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to DA Pam 600-63-10.
STANDARDS:	Identified ways to reduce stress to a manageable level in the platoon IAW DA Pam 600-63-10.

1. Learning Step / Activity 1. Determine ways to reduce stress in the platoon.

Method of Instruction: Conference / Discussion
Technique of Delivery: Small Group Instruction (SGI)
Instructor to Student Ratio: 1:16
Time of Instruction: 15 mins
Media: VGT-7 thru VGT-12


You know that leadership is a key element in preventing stress in your unit. You can reduce stress by preparing the platoon and yourself for combat. The preparation phrase requires leaders to know their job and plan for contingencies. You must maintain control of the platoon to maximize its efficiency. Let's look at six steps that you as a leader can use to reduce stress within your platoon.

NOTE: Allow the students to discuss their answer before providing the answer.


QUESTION: What are the six steps you can use to reduce stress in the platoon?

ANSWER: SEE VGT-7.

SHOW VGT-7, SIX STEPS TO REDUCE STRESS



Six Steps To Reduce Stress



- Promote unit cohesion
- Stabilize the home front
- Assume physical fitness
- Conduct tough, realistic training
- Conserve the well-being of troops
- Keep information flowing

T427/OCT 03/VGT-7Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

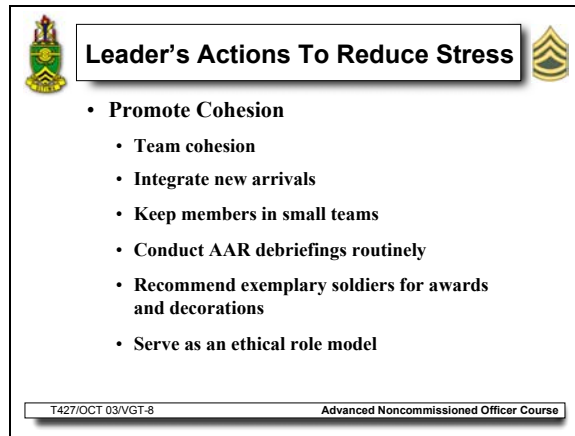
Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (pp SH-3-2 thru SH-3-6)

REMOVE VGT-7

QUESTION: What is the first step you can use to reduce stress in the platoon?

ANSWER: SEE VGT-8

SHOW VGT-8, LEADER'S ACTIONS TO REDUCE STRESS



The slide features a title box at the top with the text "Leader's Actions To Reduce Stress" flanked by a platoon sergeant's crest on the left and a sergeant's rank insignia on the right. Below the title is a bulleted list of actions. At the bottom, a footer bar contains the text "T427/OCT 03/VGT-8" on the left and "Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course" on the right.

- **Promote Cohesion**
 - Team cohesion
 - Integrate new arrivals
 - Keep members in small teams
 - Conduct AAR debriefings routinely
 - Recommend exemplary soldiers for awards and decorations
 - Serve as an ethical role model

T427/OCT 03/VGT-8 Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-2)

You will find unit cohesion as a significantly important motive for soldiers to continue doing their duty. This is the personal trust and loyalty among members of a platoon that make soldiers stick together even when it involves great hardship and danger. You must encourage as much personal cohesion as possible within the platoon before going into combat. You must ensure a sense of the unit's military identity and its mission add to the strength of the platoon. This will build esprit de corps in the platoon.

When new arrivals enter the platoon, be sure to welcome them quickly. In garrison, assign a suitable sponsor for each newcomer and ensure that the sponsors really do show the new personnel around and assist them in settling in the platoon and community. In combat, it is even more important to pair the new soldier with an appropriate buddy. Allow the newcomer time to develop combat attitudes, skills and cohesion over several days before assigning him to an extremely stressful or important situation.


As the platoon sergeant, you should assign details and missions to each team, squad, section, and vehicle crew. This lets the leaders of those elements organize the

tasks in their own leadership style and builds cohesion in each of the elements involved. Use equipment drills, physical fitness exercises, and team sports to promote mutual, reliance and closeness within each team. This promotes positive competition and respect among all teams and is useful in the soldiers letting off steam. Give praise and rewards for each team's performances.


After all training and combat missions, it is a must to conduct an after action review (AAR) if the situation permits. This AAR will allow each member of the platoon to express the good, bad, and ugly of the training or mission they just performed. You will use this feedback to correct, improve, and enhance training for future training or combat missions. As leaders, be a role model in words and deeds, and always reward your soldiers for exemplary performance or duty.

REMOVE VGT-8

SHOW VGT-9, STABILIZE THE HOME FRONT



Stabilize The Home Front



- Worrying about the home front distracts soldiers
- The home front problems may be both negative and positive
- Rapid mobilization and deployment can create home front problems for both active component and reserve component soldiers

T427/OCT 03/VGT-9Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-4)


You are responsible for protecting your soldiers from home front problems, which are often the hidden cause of battle fatigue casualties. When in garrison, always involve your soldiers' families in the unit's social activities and teach them about the unit's mission and history to include them in the sense of unit cohesion. You must know your soldier's military skills and personal backgrounds alike. Prepare your soldiers and their families against the disruption and stress of a rapid deployment by communicating the truth of the mission. Give as much information about the mission

as possible without compromising the mission. Correct information will help the soldiers and their families to deal with the unknown. Point out all Army and civilian support services that are available to them in their time of need and help them to gain moral support from the unit's chain of command. The unit or post chaplains and mental health team are also valuable resources. When soldiers are worrying about what is happening back home, it distracts them from their ability to focus on the psychological defenses on the combat stressors. This will create internal conflict over performing their combat duty and perhaps not surviving to resolve the uncertainties.


The home front problems can be negative or positive and all soldiers can face them if the conflict lacks popular support at home. The home front problems can occur during rapid mobilization and deployment for all soldiers. This is true if your soldiers have noncombatant family members in the combat zone that must be under the Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) plan. Your unit must practice their NEO plan with the families to reduce turmoil. This will reduce some home front problems.

REMOVE VGT-9

SHOW VGT-10, ASSUME PHYSICAL FITNESS



Assume Physical Fitness



Physical fitness programs-

- **promote unit cohesion.**
- **protect against battle fatigue.**
- **Promotes aerobic fitness (endurance) and muscle strength.**

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Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-4)


The third step is to create and maintain the physical fitness of the members of the platoon. Use physical fitness programs to promote platoon cohesion and to protect

against boredom and battle fatigue. A physically fit soldier can or will experience disabling battle fatigue, but being physically fit increases self-confidence and delays the onset of muscular fatigue.


REMOVE VGT-10

The fourth step is to conduct tough and realistic training to prepare your platoon for combat. This type of training gives your soldiers an ability to withstand stress at a realistic sense of confidence. This confidence in his own ability, in your leadership, and in his equipment plays a significant role. You can obtain this confidence from your soldiers initially through tough, realistic training and later through success on the battlefield. Create training as close to real combat as you can and with as many stressors as possible.

SHOW VGT-11, CONSERVE THE WELL-BEING OF THE TROOPS



Conserve The Well-Being Of The Troops



- Ensure the best water, food, equipment, shelter, sanitation, and sleep
- Pay special attention to dehydration
- Guard against poor diet and hygiene

T427/OCT 03/VGT-11Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course

Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-6)

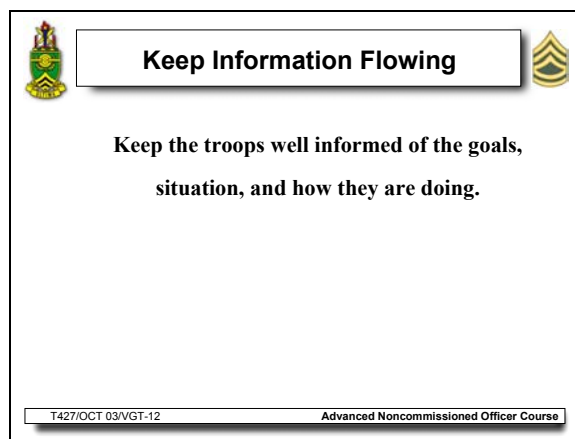
The fifth step is to conserve the well-being of the troops. This is where, under the circumstances of the mission, you provide your soldiers with the best water, food, equipment, shelter, sanitation, and sleep. In training, it may be important to seek out stress and discomfort. In combat, never waste the strength of your soldiers for nothing; there will be many occasions when it will be necessary to accept hardship to gain the advantage. When this happens, explain to the troops why the hardship is necessary.

You must pay special attention to dehydration because it can be difficult to detect. A stressed soldier under battlefield or heavy work conditions can become very dehydrated without feeling thirsty. Watch your soldiers.

Poor diet and hygiene are also common stressors, but you must ensure that your soldiers eat all of the content of their meals and maintain the highest state of personal hygiene. Remember, as a leader it is your job to enforce the standards.

REMOVE VGT-11

SHOW VGT-12, KEEP INFORMATION FLOWING



Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-6)

The sixth and last step is to keep information flowing. You must keep the troops well informed of their goals, the situation, and how they are doing. Informed soldiers normally perform well and will fight above their own capabilities. Explain unpleasant possibilities to your soldiers and put dangers in the perspective of how they will overcome them. Do not give unrealistic reassurances, since failure of expected support increases battle fatigue.

REMOVE VGT-12

CHECK ON LEARNING:

Question: What type of training should you provide to your platoon?

Answer: Tough and realistic training.

Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-5)

Question: Whom should you welcome quickly after their arrival to the platoon?

Answer: Newcomers.

Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-2)

Question: How can you conserve the well-being of the troops?

Answer: Under the circumstances of the mission, provide your soldiers with the best water, food, equipment, shelter, sanitation, and sleep.

Ref: DA Pam 600-63-10 (p SH-3-6)

SECTION IV. SUMMARY

Method of Instruction: <u>Conference / Discussion</u>
Technique of Delivery: <u>Small Group Instruction (SGI)</u>
Instructor to Student Ratio is: <u>1:16</u>
Time of Instruction: <u>5 mins</u>
Media: <u>Small Group Instruction (SGI)</u>

Check on Learning

None

Review / Summarize Lesson

You should remember that soldiers must train for battle to achieve victory with the fewest casualties. Stress can and will produce some casualties even before the fighting starts, so it is important that you understand stress terminology, the stress concept, and steps to prevent battle fatigue taught in this lesson. You will use the techniques in this lesson to prepare tough, realistic training, an excellent physical fitness program, well thought out AARs, and your leadership to teach your soldiers in the platoon how to deal with stress. This will help to conserve your soldiers' fighting strength for combat missions.

SECTION V. STUDENT EVALUATION

Testing Requirements

NOTE: Describe how the student must demonstrate accomplishment of the TLO. Refer student to the Student Evaluation Plan.

You will take a 50-question written examination. The examination will include questions on the ELOs and TLO from this lesson. You must correctly answer 35 questions or more to receive a passing score (70 percent). This is a graduation requirement.

Feedback Requirements

NOTE: Feedback is essential to effective learning. Schedule and provide feedback on the evaluation and any information to help answer students' questions about the test. Provide remedial training as needed.

Enabling Learning Objective A

Learning Step 1

VGT-1, Controlling Stress



Controlling Stress



- **Monitor the signs of stress and recognize when and if they change.**
- **Identify and monitor the causes of stress; that is, the stressors.**
- **Classify the stressors into those which can be controlled (increased, decreased, avoided, or otherwise changed) versus those which are uncontrollable.**



Controlling Stress Cont



- **Control those stressors it is possible to change by focusing the stress in the desired direction, either up or down.**
- **Help soldiers adapt to the stressors which are not possible to change.**
- **Learn (and teach) how to directly lower (or raise) the stress level within the individual soldier as needed, at specific times, in specific situations.**

Enabling Learning Objective B

Learning Step 1

VGT-3, Three Continuums of Army Life



Three Continuums of Army Life



- **Responsibility**
- **Location**
- **Army Mission**

Enabling Learning Objective C

Learning Step 1

VGT-4, Responsibilities for Controlling Combat Stress



RESPONSIBILITIES for Controlling Combat Stress



- **Unit**
- **Senior Leaders**
- **Junior Leaders**
- **Staff Section**
- **Chaplain**
- **Unit Medical Personnel**

Enabling Learning Objective E

Learning Step 1

VGT-5, Categories of Combat Stress



Categories of Combat Stress



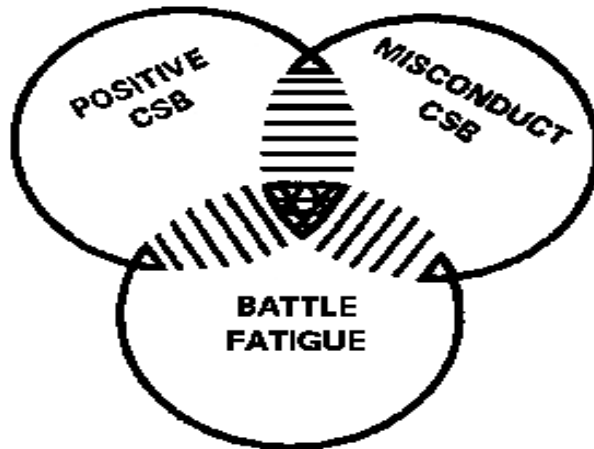
- **Positive Combat Stress**
- **Misconduct Stress Behaviors**
- **Battle Fatigue**



Overlap Behaviors



DURING THE WAR:



{NOTE OVERLAPPING}



Six Steps To Reduce Stress



- **Promote unit cohesion**
- **Stabilize the home front**
- **Assume physical fitness**
- **Conduct tough, realistic training**
- **Conserve the well-being of troops**
- **Keep information flowing**



Leader's Actions To Reduce Stress



- **Promote Cohesion**
 - **Team cohesion**
 - **Integrate new arrivals**
 - **Keep members in small teams**
 - **Conduct AAR debriefings routinely**
 - **Recommend exemplary soldiers for awards and decorations**
 - **Serve as an ethical role model**



Stabilize The Home Front



- **Worrying about the home front distracts soldiers**
- **The home front problems may be both negative and positive**
- **Rapid mobilization and deployment can create home front problems for both active component and reserve component soldiers**



Assume Physical Fitness



Physical fitness programs-

- **promote unit cohesion.**
- **protect against battle fatigue.**
- **Promotes aerobic fitness (endurance) and muscle strength.**



Conserve The Well-Being Of The Troops



- **Ensure the best water, food, equipment, shelter, sanitation, and sleep**
- **Pay special attention to dehydration**
- **Guard against poor diet and hygiene**



Keep Information Flowing



**Keep the troops well informed of the goals,
situation, and how they are doing.**

Appendix B Test(s) and Test Solution(s) (N/A)

Appendix C Practical Exercises and Solutions (N/A)

HANDOUTS FOR LESSON: T427 version 1

This appendix contains the items listed in this table---

Title/Synopsis	Pages
SH-1, Advance Sheet	SH-1-1 thru SH-1-3
SH-2, Extract from FM 22-51	SH-2-1 thru SH-2-36
SH-3, Extract from DA PAM 600-63-10	SH-3-1 thru SH-3-6

Student Handout 1

This student handout contains the Advance Sheet.

STUDENT HANDOUT 1

Advance Sheet

Lesson Hours

This lesson consists of two hours of small group instruction.

Overview

You as a leader must be able to identify and correct stress within your platoon. Your ability to recognize stress in yourself and your platoon can be vital to you. This lesson material will show you how to prepare for and overcome stress within your platoon during peacetime or wartime.

Learning Objective

Terminal Learning Objective (TLO)

Action:	Recognize how leader actions can control stress in a platoon.
Conditions:	As a platoon sergeant faced with simulated combat stress conditions in a classroom environment, with access to FM 22-51 and DA Pam 600-63-10.
Standards:	Identified and recognized measures to reduce stress to a manageable level in peacetime and wartime in a platoon IAW FM 22-51 and DA Pam 600-63-10.

ELO A: Identify the importance of combat stress control.

ELO B: Identify the three continuums of Army life as it relate to combat stress.

ELO C: Identify the responsibilities for controlling combat (conflict) stress.

ELO D: Determine how stress can affect task performance.

ELO E: Identify combat stress behaviors.

ELO F: Determine ways to reduce stress in the platoon.

Assignment

The student assignments for this lesson are:

- Read Student Handouts 1 thru 3

Additional Subject Area Resources

None

Bring to Class

- Pen or pencil.
 - Writing paper.
 - Student Handouts 1 thru 3.
-

Student Handout

This student handout contains an extract from FM 22-51.

CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF COMBAT STRESS CONTROL

1-1. Introduction

This chapter presents the concept and scope of combat stress control. It reviews historical experiences with stress casualties in different intensities of conflict and looks at the potential stressors in high-tech battles. It lists the responsibilities for combat stress control of all junior (direct) and senior (organizational) leaders, staffs, chaplains, and health care providers. It also discusses the responsibilities of specialized combat stress control/ mental health personnel.

NOTE

Battle fatigue and misconduct stress behaviors are preventable with strong effective leadership.

1-2. Combat Stress Control

- a. Controlling combat stress is often the deciding factor-the difference between victory and defeat-in all forms of human conflict. Stressors are a fact of combat and soldiers must face them. It is controlled combat stress (when properly focused by training, unit cohesion, and leadership) that gives soldiers the necessary alertness, strength, and endurance to accomplish their mission. Controlled combat stress can call forth stress reactions of loyalty, selflessness, and heroism. Conversely, uncontrolled combat stress causes erratic or harmful behavior that disrupts or interferes with accomplishment of the unit mission. Uncontrolled combat stress could impair mission performance and may bring disgrace, disaster, and defeat.
- b. The art of war aims to impose so much stress on the enemy soldiers that they lose their will to fight. Both sides try to do this and at times accept severe stress themselves in order to inflict greater stress on the enemy. To win, combat stress must be controlled.
- c. The word *control* has been chosen deliberately to focus thinking and action within the Army. Since the same word may have contrasting connotations to different people, it is important to make its intended meaning clear. The word *control* is used (rather than the word *management*) to emphasize the active steps which leaders, supporting personnel, and individual soldiers must take to keep stress within the acceptable range. This does not mean that control and management are mutually exclusive terms. Management is, by definition, the exercise of control. Within common usage, however, and especially within Army usage, management has the connotation of being a somewhat detached, number-driven, higher echelon process rather than a direct, inspirational, leadership process.
- d. Stress is the body's and mind's process for dealing with uncertain change and danger. Elimination of stress is both impossible and undesirable in either the Army's combat or peacetime missions.
- e. The objectives of stress control are as follows:

- (1) To keep stress within acceptable limits for mission performance and to achieve the ideal (optimal) level of stress when feasible.
- (2) To return stress to acceptable limits when it becomes temporarily disruptive.
- (3) To progressively increase tolerance to stress so that soldiers can endure and function under the extreme stress which is unavoidable in combat.

f. How can stress be controlled? Stress is controlled in the same ways other complex processes are controlled.

- (1) Monitor the signs of stress and recognize when and if they change. To be effective, this recognition should come well before the stress becomes disruptive and causes dysfunction.
- (2) Identify and monitor the causes of stress; that is, the stressors. Stress and stressors are defined in detail in Chapter 2.
- (3) Classify the stressors into those which can be controlled (increased, decreased, avoided, or otherwise changed) versus those which cannot be controlled.
- (4) Control those stressors which can be changed by focusing the stress in the desired direction, either up or down.
- (5) Help soldiers adapt to the stressors which cannot be changed.
- (6) Learn (and teach) how to directly lower (or raise) the stress level within the individual soldier as needed, at specific times, in specific situations.

1-3. Scope of Combat Stress Control

Combat stress control is much more than just a few stress reduction techniques which busy leaders are supposed to learn from books or mental health workers and use now and then when the stress seems intense. Army combat stress control activities must be a part of everything the Army does. Combat stress control must be a natural part of the three continuums of Army life: *responsibility*, *location*, and *Army mission*. Note that a weakness or gap anywhere in these three continuums can cause weaknesses, overloads, or breakdowns in other aspects of Army life.

a. *Responsibility*. Responsibility for combat stress control requires a continuous interaction that begins with every soldier and his buddies. It also involves the soldier's family members. The interaction continues through the small team's combat lifesaver (when there is one) and the combat medic. Stress control requires special involvement from direct (small unit) leaders. The responsibility extends up through the

organizational leaders and their staffs (both officers and noncommissioned officers [NCOs]) at all echelons. Appendix A describes combat stress risk factors and prescribes leaders' actions to control them. Leaders, staffs, and individual soldiers all receive assistance from the supporting chaplains, the medical personnel, and combat stress control/mental health personnel (see Appendix B for information pertaining to combat stress control units). If any link in the chain of responsibility is weak, it is the responsibility of the other members of the chain to strengthen it.

b. *Location.* The location for combat stress control extends continuously --

- From the site of battle, disaster, or rigorous duty.
- Through the unit's forward and rearward support areas.
- Through the communications zone (COMMZ), if present.
- To the continental United States (CONUS).
- To the unit's home station.
- To the rear detachment.
- To the family support group.
- To the Army hospitals and medical centers.

The location even extends to the Department of Veterans Affairs and veterans organizations after the soldiers' discharge, medical separation, or retirement. Preventive efforts, and also treatment for stress dysfunction, should be actively accomplished at each location. If stress control is weak at any one location, this can cause stress and breakdown not only there, but elsewhere in other locations.

c. *Army Missions.* The Army operations that require combat stress control are all inclusive. They extend continuously --

- From garrison maintenance activities.
- To peacetime training exercises.
- To operations other than war.
- To war.
- To the integrated battlefield.

The same basic stress control principles apply across the entire range of Army operations. Within our rapidly changing world, many Army units have had their missions shift across a wide range of operations in a matter of weeks, sometimes with little advance warning. Individual soldiers, family members, unit leaders and staffs, chaplains, and medics (including the mental health/combat stress control teams) must be involved and work

together continuously. They must practice stress control against the frequent minor stressors and the occasional severe stressors of peacetime. This, and only this, enables them to be ready on short notice for the extreme stressors of war.

1-4. Historical Experience

Concept.

a. Origins of the Combat Stress Control

(1) Combat stress control is not new.

The basic leadership techniques which this manual will review were discovered and taught by successful military leaders through the centuries and have long been cornerstones of US Army leadership training. Combat stress control medical doctrine for preventing and treating stress casualties is sometimes mistakenly said to have originated from the Israeli Defense Force experiences in the 1970s and 1980s. Quite the contrary, the US Army learned that basic doctrine from its allies during World War I (WWI).

(a) The French and British discovered that if stress casualties were evacuated far to the rear, many became chronic psychiatric cripples. If treated quickly close to their units, most recovered and returned to duty. The US Army Surgeon General of that time recommended that we adopt a three-echelon system for prevention, triage, treatment, and return to duty of stress casualties.

1. *First echelon.* The US Army attached a trained psychiatrist to each division. The psychiatrist's role was to advise command in the prevention of stress casualties, to screen out the unsuitable, and to assure that overstressed soldiers were rested and returned to duty within the division whenever possible. Following British practice, stress casualties in the division were labeled "Not Yet Diagnosed, Nervous" (NYDN). This avoided even the suggestion of physical injury implied by the dramatic popular label "shell shock" or the implication of psychiatric illness conveyed by the official diagnosis of "war neurosis." Under good conditions, 70 percent of stress casualties were returned to duty within the division.

2. *Second echelon.* Behind the divisions in WWI, the US Army had specialized neurological hospitals (150 beds) whose sole function was to provide additional brief rest and rehabilitation to those NYDN cases

whom the division psychiatrist was unable to return to duty. These neuropsychiatric facilities also provided brief rest and rehabilitation to persistent cases of "gas mania" or "gas hysteria" who believed they had suffered chemical injuries, even though they had not been truly injured. About 55 percent of the cases sent to these facilities returned to duty in an average of two weeks.

3. *Third echelon.* Further to the rear was a specialized base hospital which provided several weeks of additional treatment for cases who failed to improve in the neurological hospital. It returned many of those cases to useful duty.

(b) The three-echelon system worked well, but on occasions when the tactical situation interfered with forward treatment, it clearly showed the superiority of the forward deployed part of the program.

(2) The experience of WWI was forgotten between wars. It had to be rediscovered in World War II (WWII) after several disastrous experiences when large numbers of psychiatric casualties were overevacuated in the early battles. By late WWII in the European and Mediterranean theaters, all divisions again had a division psychiatrist with mental health assistants. The psychiatrist supervised a Training and Rehabilitation Center in the division rear. The psychiatrists trained and supervised the regimental and battalion surgeons in recognizing and treating combat exhaustion or battle fatigue cases. Most regimental combat teams (equivalent to our brigades) had an exhaustion center in the regimental trains area. Many battalions maintained a rest area at the battalion field kitchens. The surgeons supervised these facilities to assure that soldiers who were rotated back to them recovered quickly and returned to duty. Behind the division there were specialized clearing companies commanded and staffed by psychiatrists. These clearing companies provided additional treatment for nonresponders or problem cases. Specialized base hospitals were located in the COMMZ.

(3) Following WWII, the lessons learned were embodied in a table of organization and equipment (TOE) unit, the mobile psychiatric detachment, or "KO" team. These teams functioned very effectively in Korea.

b. *Experience in War.*

(1) In the WWII Mediterranean and European theaters, the average incidence of combat exhaustion casualties was one case requiring medical holding and treatment for every four wounded in action (WIA) (a 1:4 ratio). In really intense or prolonged fighting, the ratio rose to 1:2. On the Gothic line in Italy, the 1st Armored Division suffered 137 combat exhaustion casualties for 250 WIA (a 1:1.8 ratio). Overall, with the correct treatment, 50 to 70 percent of combat exhaustion casualties returned to combat within 3 days, and most of the remainder returned to useful duty within a few weeks.

(2) During WWII the 6th Marine Division was involved in the Battle of Okinawa. They fought day after day and were up against a determined, dug-in Japanese resistance, rain and mud, and heavy artillery. The division suffered 2,662 WIA and had 1,289 combat exhaustion casualties (a ratio to WIA of 1:2). Many of the combat exhaustion cases were evacuated to Navy ships offshore and few of those cases ever returned to duty.

(3) In the Pacific theater in WWII, there was about one neuropsychiatric casualty evacuated from the theater for every one WIA (a 1:1 ratio). Many of these troops appeared psychotic (bizarrely out of touch with reality). Most of these, however, did not come from the combat units or areas. They were combat service support (CSS) troops left behind by the war on the hot jungle or coral islands or the cold, damp Aleutian Islands. The stressors were the combination of isolation, monotony, boredom, chronic discomfort, and low-grade illness from the environment, plus fear of disease, injury, and surprise attack. In retrospect, it was realized that evacuating these bizarre stress reaction cases home only encouraged more soldiers to "go crazy" when they temporarily reached their limit of tolerance to stress. It would have been better to have sent them to rest camps close to their units. This might have returned the majority quickly to duty, as was done with the combat exhaustion cases in the European and Mediterranean theaters.

(4) It was also shown in WWII that tough training and esprit de corps prevented many battle fatigue casualties. Elite units, such as the ranger and airborne units, had less than one battle fatigue casualty for every ten WIA. This unit cohesiveness prevailed even in combat assaults, such as Normandy and Arnhem, where extremely high casualties were suffered. Unit cohesiveness also prevailed during prolonged fighting like the Battle of the Bulge.

(5) During the Yom Kippur War (1973), the Israeli experience confirmed the risk of stress casualties in the modern, high-tech, continuous operations (CONOPS) battle. The Israelis counted on

the high cohesion and training of their troops and leaders to keep stress casualties to a minimum. They were caught, however, by strategic and tactical surprise and were forced to mobilize on a religious (fasting) holiday. They sent their reserves piecemeal into battle. Their Arab opponents, whom they had previously discounted as inefficient, used massed artillery, armor, and wire-guided missiles. The Arab units followed the Soviet CONOPS, echeloned-attack doctrine. Israeli estimates of stress casualties suggest that large numbers of Israeli soldiers, including veterans and leaders, became unable to function solely because of stress. Stress casualties were frequent in the Golan Heights fighting, in the initial defense of the Sinai, and during the recrossing of the Suez Canal. Since the Israeli Defense Force had no plans for treatment and return to duty, all such cases were evacuated to hospitals in Israel. True to the experience of WWI and WWII, many of these Israeli soldiers who were evacuated remain psychiatrically disabled today.

(6) After the 1973 war, the Israelis instituted a model program of leadership training and medical/mental health support. This was intended to prevent combat stress casualties and to treat those cases which occurred in the brigade and division support areas. However, in the 1982 Lebanon invasion, many cases were inadvertently evacuated by helicopter to Israel in the initial haste of the invasion. Few of these cases returned to full duty, while 60 to 80 percent of those treated in Lebanon did.

(7) One Israeli armored battalion trapped in a desperate night action against the Syrians had approximately 30 combat stress cases and 30 WIA (a 1:1 ratio). A combat engineer battalion which was accidentally bombed by an Israeli fighter-bomber had approximately 25 killed in action (KIA) and 200 WIA. This same battalion soon had 20 immediate combat stress casualties. Approximately 25 other soldiers developed delayed stress reactions over succeeding days (a ratio to WIA of 1:4.4). Even the Israelis' strong preventive program could not completely prevent battle fatigue casualties in a high-tech war.

c. Experience in Vietnam.

(1) In Vietnam, battle fatigue casualty rates rarely exceeded one per ten WIA. The reasons for the few battle fatigue casualties included the sporadic nature of fighting and our air and artillery superiority. Other factors were well-supplied fire bases, scheduled rest and recuperation (R&R), and a fixed combat tour. All these factors kept most battle fatigue cases at levels which could be treated in their units and did not require medical holding or hospitalization.

(2) Other behavioral problems related to loneliness and frustration, however, were associated with combat stress in Vietnam. Serious incidents of poor discipline occurred, including commission of atrocities at My Lai (March 1968), combat refusal, and even "fraggings" (murder) of leaders. These events threatened unit cohesion and the chain of command. By 1970-1971, when US ground forces were rarely committed to offensive operations, "neuropsychiatric casualties," especially drug and alcohol abuse and addiction, became epidemic. By September 1971, neuropsychiatric cases accounted for over 60 percent of all medical evacuations from the theater. Today those misconduct problems are recognized as having contributed to the high incidence of delayed posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in Vietnam veterans. Due to the different nature of the stress, these types of misconduct stress behaviors are more likely than battle fatigue in operations other than war (conflict). These misconduct stress behaviors can seriously undermine the objectives and successes of the mission.

d. *Experience in Catastrophic Events During Peacetime and Operations Other Than War.* Within the past few years, numerous accidents and hostile incidents have demonstrated the value of crisis stress control for soldiers, their families, and civilians caught in the turmoil of peacetime operations. Some recent historical events are listed in Table 1-1. Unit leaders aided by post and hospital mental health personnel, chaplains, and others played key roles in providing crisis stress control for many of these tragic incidents. In the peacetime military, as in civilian police, fire, and disaster relief, stress debriefing of critical incidents has proved its value in preventing and treating disabling PTSD.

1-5. Effects of Battle on Soldiers, Units, and Leaders

a. War is fundamentally a contest of wills fought by men, not machines. Ardant Du Picq, a 19th century French officer and student of men in battle, reminded us that, "You can reach into the well of courage only so many times before the well runs dry." Even before that, Marshall De Saxe, writing in the 18th century, pointed out that, "A soldier's courage must be reborn daily," and went on to say that the most important task of leaders was to understand this, to care for and prepare soldiers before battle, and to use tactics during battle which recognize that courage must be renewed.

b. Commanders must understand that in battle men and units are more likely to fail catastrophically than gradually. Commanders and staffs, assisted by combat stress control personnel, medics, chaplains, and others, must be alert to subtle indicators of fatigue, fear, poor discipline, and reduced morale. They must take measures to deal with these symptoms before their cumulative effects cause a unit to collapse. Staffs and commanders at higher levels must be advised about the impact of

intense or prolonged combat on subordinate units. Military organizations can fight at peak efficiency for only so long. Prolonged demands of combat cause efficiency to drop even when physical losses are not great.

c. A unit may not be capable of performing its mission adequately if soldier resources are depleted because --

- Vigilance deteriorates.
- Determinations and calculations become inaccurate.
- Reports become faulty.
- Decisions become slow and inaccurate.
- Orders are misunderstood/forgotten.
- Weapons are misused/underused.
- Maintenance and preplanning are forgotten.

Table 1-1. Examples of Catastrophic Events During Peacetime and Operations Other Than War - Historic Incidents

-
- THE CRASH AT GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND, OF A CONTRACT AIRLINER CARRYING HOME ONE-THIRD OF A BATTALION OF THE 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION FROM THE SINAI PEACEKEEPING MISSION.*
 - THE CAR BOMBING BY SHIITE FANATICS OF THE MARINE BATTALION'S BARRACKS AT BEIRUT AIRPORT, LEBANON,** AND OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN BEIRUT.
 - THE DEATH BY BURNING OF MANY FORT KNOX SCHOOL CHILDREN WHEN A DRUNK DRIVER CRASHED INTO THEIR SCHOOL BUS.
 - THE HIJACKING OF THE OCEAN LINER *ACHILLE LAURO** AND OF SEVERAL AIRLINERS* BY PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS.
 - THE SERIOUS DAMAGING OF THE DESTROYER USS *STARK* BY AN ACCIDENTALLY LAUNCHED IRAQI MISSILE IN THE PERSIAN GULF.*,**
 - THE SHOOTING DOWN OF AN IRANIAN CIVILIAN AIRLINER IN THE PERSIAN GULF BY THE CRUISER *VINCENNES*.***
 - THE CRASH OF TWO ITALIAN JETS INTO THE CROWD OF SPECTATORS AT AN AIR SHOW IN RAMSTEIN, WEST GERMANY.****
 - THE EXPLOSION OF A GUN TURRET ON THE BATTLESHIP *IOWA* DURING TARGET PRACTICE,** AND SEVERAL FATAL FIRES AND CRASHES ABOARD SUBMARINES AND AIRCRAFT CARRIERS.**
 - THE CRASH OF TWO CALIFORNIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD (CAARNG) HELICOPTERS WHILE ON DRUG INTERDICTION SERVICE.#
 - DISASTER RELIEF TO SOUTH FLORIDA FOLLOWING HURRICANE ANDREW.**,** AND OPERATION RESTORE HOPE IN SOMALIA.***
-

- * 17th Medical Command, US Army, Europe, sent its Stress Management Team.
 - ** The Navy SPRINT (Special Psychiatric Rapid Intervention Team) was deployed.
 - *** The Board of Inquiry cited "combat stress" as primary cause of the error.
 - **** The mental health debriefing assisted survivors and care givers.
 - # The CAARNG Medical Brigade sent a special Stress Control Team.
 - ## The 10th Mountain, 24th Infantry, and 82nd Airborne Divisions' Mental Health Sections played important parts.
 - ### The 10th Mountain Division's Mental Health Section and a new Combat Stress Control Detachment were deployed and debriefed Army and Marine units.
-

- Maintenance and preplanning are forgotten.
- Motivation to perform duties decreases.
- Leaders' effectiveness decreases.
- Training becomes ineffective.

d. Degradation of soldiers' performance means that they lose a portion of their normal effectiveness. Continuous, unrelieved operations and excessive stress degrade performance and erode soldier resources. Combat capability is cut whether the unit is at 50 percent strength or at full strength with soldiers who are only 50 percent effective. As individual and unit capabilities fall, battle fatigue may contribute not only to more battle fatigue casualties but also to higher rates of wounds and disease and nonbattle injuries (DNBI).

e. The skill and courage of leaders at all levels are critical to success in operations across the full range of conflict. The chaos of combat places a premium on initiative, unit cohesion, and mental and physical preparedness of soldiers and units. While the importance of winning the

first battle is great, the ability to fight sustained campaigns is vital to deterrence and to victory. In war, temporary battle fatigue casualties are inevitable but can be treated and returned to duty in or close to their units. In operations other than war (conflict), the enemy threat counts on psychological stress and misconduct stress behaviors to disable the defender. In operations other than war (conflict), drug and alcohol abuse, other violations of military discipline, and criminal acts must be prevented by strong leadership. Misconduct stress behaviors are dealt with through the legal system. Medical care and treatment are provided when necessary.

1-6. The Potential High-Tech Battlefield

United States Army planners have predicted what future high-tech combat could entail. This was demonstrated in the recent past with the world's confrontation with Iraq over the seizure of Kuwait. Based on the current world situation, such future battles are not unthinkable. The unprecedented debilitating effects of battlefield in the twenty-first century will demand even more attention to the preparation of soldiers, crews, and leaders for combat hardships. In such battlefields, the soldier will face many challenges.

a. *Challenge of Isolation.* The first challenge is isolation. Units may experience periods of combat where forces are intermixed and lines of communication are broken. Units will experience feelings of uncertainty and helplessness from unpredictable strikes by long-range weapon systems. To make matters worse, these strikes may be inflicted by one's own forces in the confusion of battle. The certain use of smoke and obscurants will limit soldiers' vision, promoting feelings of separation, abandonment, and vulnerability.

b. *Challenge of Higher Rates of Casualties from Conventional, Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons/Agents.* The increased rate of destruction of potential future weaponry has both physical and psychological effects. Losing 40 to 60 percent of an entire unit in minutes or hours could leave the remaining soldiers incapacitated. The rapid and horrible death of their comrades and leaders could have a definite and detrimental effect on the mental stability of the unit. Surviving soldiers will have to be prepared to overcome the experience of mass human destruction. They will need to be trained to take over from those lost and to reshape units that can continue to fight.

c. *Challenge of Human-Technological Imbalance.* The emergence of new technologies has significantly increased the range of weapons, reduced reaction time, and changed conditions over which battles are fought. This new technology has the potential to exceed the capacity of human crews to fight.

- All-weather, day-and-night capable vehicles which can operate for extended periods without resupply are limited only by the crews' need for sleep.

- High-probability-of-kill, direct fire systems will be degraded over time by the stress and fatigue levels of the men aiming those weapons.
- Improved sensors and longer range weapons could exceed the capabilities of a tactical headquarters to plan and execute battles fought over expanded areas of operations.
- Short engagement times and the increased lethality of new weapons could overwhelm the ability of staffs to control and coordinate the overall battle.

Soldiers, leaders, and staffs will face problems of reduced efficiency effectiveness when fighting over extended periods. These conditions will tend to neutralize the potential gains of new war-fighting technologies and force new approaches to the preparation and employment of soldiers, leaders, and staffs.

d. *Challenge of the Mental Rigors of Combat.* Armies must initiate training programs to help precondition soldiers to the mental rigors of combat. This is of vital importance as the potentially catastrophic effect of battle stress in future warfare becomes evident. The military force that does this best will have a decided edge in any war. Future combat will strain human endurance to unprecedented levels. If these challenges are left unchecked by poor mental and physical conditioning of soldiers, they could result in the disastrous failure of entire units. Failure to consider the human factors in an environment of increased lethality and uncertainty could cause a nation's concept of warfare to be irrelevant. With the miniaturization and spread of high-tech (and perhaps even of nuclear, biological, and chemical [NBC]) weapons, this can be just as true in operations other than war (conflict) as in war.

1-7. Responsibilities for Controlling Combat (Conflict) Stress

a. *Unit Cohesiveness Development.* Rigorous, realistic training for war must go on continuously to assure unit readiness. Emphasis must be placed on establishing and maintaining cohesive units. Unit training and activities must emphasize development of soldier skills. This development should focus on building trust and establishing effective communication throughout the unit.

b. *Senior (Organizational) Leaders' Responsibilities.* The chain of command must ensure that the standards for military leadership are met. Senior leaders must provide the necessary information and resources to the junior leaders to control combat stress and to make stress work for the US Army and against the enemy. Senior leaders' responsibilities are listed in Table 1-2.

c. *Junior (Direct) Leaders' Responsibilities.* Junior leaders, and especially the NCOs, have the crucial business of applying the principles of stress control day-by-day, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute. These responsibilities overlap with senior leaders' responsibilities but include parts that are

fundamentally "sergeants' business," supported by the officers.. See Table 1-3, page 1-11, for junior leaders' responsibilities.

d. *Staff Section Responsibilities.* Each element of the commander's staff (adjutant, intelligence, operations, logistics, and civil and public affairs [if present]) has its own area of responsibility that has particular relevance to stress control (see Table 1-4, pages 1-12--13). For example, the adjutant's responsibility for mail and decorations is more than just "nice to have." These are important stress control measures. Morale, welfare, and recreation opportunities, and even the use of Army bands, are valuable ways to sustain morale and combat readiness. For additional information on the role of Army bands, see Appendix C.

Table 1-2. Senior Leaders' Responsibilities

-
- BE COMPETENT, COMMITTED, COURAGEOUS, CANDID, AND CARING.
 - PLAN TO ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION WITH AS FEW LOSSES AS POSSIBLE.
 - SET THE POLICY AND COMMAND CLIMATE FOR STRESS CONTROL, ESPECIALLY TO BUILD TEAMS WITH HIGH UNIT COHESION.
 - SERVE AS AN ETHICAL ROLE MODEL.
 - MAKE "THE BUREAUCRACY" WORK FOR THE TROOPS.
 - ASSURE RESOURCES TO "TAKE CARE OF THE TROOPS."
 - PLAN FOR AND CONDUCT TOUGH, REALISTIC TRAINING TO INCLUDE LIVE FIRES.
 - PROVIDE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE TO THE TROOPS.
 - ASSURE THAT MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH/COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PERSONNEL ARE ASSIGNED AND TRAINED WITH THEIR SUPPORTED UNITS.
 - PLAN FOR COMBAT STRESS CONTROL IN ALL OPERATIONS.
 - PROVIDE THE JUNIOR LEADERS/NCOs WITH THE NECESSARY GUIDANCE.
 - ENSURE RISK ASSESSMENTS ARE CONDUCTED PRIOR TO ALL TRAINING AND COMBAT OPERATIONS.
 - SUPERVISE THE JUNIOR LEADERS/NCOs AND REWARD THEIR SUCCESS.
 - BE VISIBLE.
 - LEAD ALL STRESS CONTROL MEASURES BY GOOD EXAMPLE.
 - MAINTAIN (THROUGH POSITIVE LEADERSHIP AND, WHEN NECESSARY, WITH DISCIPLINARY ACTION) THE HIGH STANDARDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF LAND WARFARE.
-

Table 1-3. Junior Leaders' Responsibilities - Combat Stress Control

-
- BE COMPETENT, COMMITTED, COURAGEOUS, CANDID, AND CARING.
 - BUILD COHESIVE TEAMS; INTEGRATE NEW PERSONNEL QUICKLY.
 - CROSS-TRAIN SOLDIERS WHEREVER AND WHENEVER POSSIBLE.
 - PLAN AND CONDUCT TOUGH REALISTIC TRAINING THAT REPLICATES COMBAT CONDITIONS, ESPECIALLY LIVE FIRES.
 - TAKE CARE OF THE TROOPS (INCLUDING THE LEADERS).
 - ASSURE PHYSICAL FITNESS, NUTRITION, HYDRATION, ADEQUATE CLOTHING AND SHELTER, AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE MEASURES.
 - MAKE AND ENFORCE SLEEP PLANS.
 - KEEP ACCURATE INFORMATION FLOWING DOWN TO THE LOWEST LEVEL (AND BACK UP AGAIN); DISPEL RUMORS.
 - ENCOURAGE SHARING OF RESOURCES AND FEELINGS.
 - CONDUCT AFTER-ACTION DEBRIEFINGS ROUTINELY.
 - MAINTAIN (THROUGH POSITIVE LEADERSHIP AND, WHEN NECESSARY, WITH DISCIPLINARY ACTION) THE HIGH STANDARDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF LAND WARFARE.
 - RECOMMEND EXEMPLARY SOLDIERS FOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS.
 - RECOGNIZE EXCESS STRESS EARLY AND GIVE IMMEDIATE SUPPORT.
 - KEEP THOSE STRESSED SOLDIERS WHO CAN STILL PERFORM THEIR DUTIES IN THE UNIT, AND PROVIDE EXTRA SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE THEM BACK TO FULL EFFECTIVENESS.
 - SEND THOSE STRESSED SOLDIERS WHO CANNOT GET NEEDED REST IN THEIR SMALL UNIT BACK TO A SUPPORTING ELEMENT FOR BRIEF SLEEP, FOOD, HYGIENE, AND LIMITED DUTY, TO RETURN IN 1 TO 2 DAYS.
 - REFER TEMPORARILY UNMANAGEABLE STRESS CASES THROUGH CHANNELS FOR MEDICAL EVALUATION AND TREATMENT.
 - WELCOME RECOVERED BATTLE FATIGUE CASUALTIES BACK AND GIVE THEM MEANINGFUL WORK AND RESPONSIBILITIES.
-

* Note that every soldier ultimately must be a junior (direct) leader. Each soldier must exercise self-leadership and control stress for self and others.

Table 1-4. Staff Responsibilities for Combat Stress Control

S1/G1 PERSONNEL

- ASSURE SOLDIERS' PAY, MAIL, AND THE AVAILABILITY OF TELEPHONES WHEN FEASIBLE.
- ASSURE PERSONNEL REPLACEMENT, PREFERABLY WITH COHESIVE TEAMS.
- RETURN RECOVERED CASUALTIES TO ORIGINAL UNITS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.
- ASSURE RAPID, ACCURATE CASUALTY REPORTING.
- ASSIST PLANNING FOR MEDICAL CARE AND EVACUATION.
- ASSURE BATH, LAUNDRY, CLOTHING REPLACEMENT, COMFORT KITS, AND OTHER LIKE AREA/ITEMS WITH THE S4.
- PLAN MORALE/WELFARE/REST AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITIES.
- UTILIZE ARMY BANDS TO SUSTAIN ESPRIT, MORALE.
- MONITOR IN COORDINATION WITH THE S3/G3 CUMULATIVE STRESS IN UNIT SUCH AS SLEEP LOSS, CASUALTIES, AND NUMBER OF NEW PERSONNEL REPLACEMENTS.
- RECOMMEND ROTATION OF UNITS INTO RESERVE OR FORMAL RECONSTITUTION.
- KEEP INFORMATION FLOW OPEN WITH REAR DETACHMENTS AND FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS.
- COLLATE STATISTICS ON MISCONDUCT BEHAVIORS (DISCIPLINARY AND MILITARY POLICE ACTIONS) WHICH COULD BE DUE TO COMBAT OR OTHER STRESS.
- PROCESS TIMELY AWARDING OF INDIVIDUAL AND UNIT DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS.
- KNOW LOCATIONS AND CAPABILITIES OF COMBAT STRESS CONTROL TEAMS AND COORDINATE WITH THEM AS REQUIRED.

S2/G2 INTELLIGENCE

- DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ON ENEMY WEAPONS' CAPABILITIES, TACTICS, AND ACTIONS.
 - DISSEMINATE INFORMATION OF WEATHER, TERRAIN, AND OTHER POTENTIAL STRESSORS.
 - DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ON ENEMY TROOP CONCENTRATION, CAPABILITIES, AND LIKELY COURSES OF ACTION.
 - ENSURE ISSUE OF APPROPRIATE CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT.
 - PREVENT UNPLEASANT SURPRISES.
-

Table 1-4. Staff Responsibilities for Combat Stress Control (Continued)

S3/G3 OPERATIONS

- ENCOURAGE MAXIMUM DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL PLAN, LIMITED ONLY BY ESSENTIAL OPERATIONAL SECURITY.
- CONSIDER STRESS ISSUES AND CUMULATIVE STRESS OF UNITS WHEN MAKING OPERATIONAL PLANS WITH S1.
- PLAN ROTATION OF UNITS TO ALLOW SLEEP/RESPIRE.
- SCHEDULE LIVE FIRE AND MISSION REHEARSAL TRAINING IN THE COMBAT ZONE WHEN FEASIBLE.
- INTEGRATE COMBAT STRESS CONTROL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS INTO THE OPERATIONAL PLAN.

S4/G4 LOGISTICS

- ASSURE ADEQUATE FOOD, WATER, AMMUNITION, AND FUEL.
- KEEP WEAPONS SYSTEMS AND COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT FUNCTIONING.
- ASSURE BATH, LAUNDRY, CLOTHING, AND OTHER LIKE AREAS/ITEMS WITH S1/G1.
- ASSURE RESPECTFUL HANDLING OF THE DEAD.
- ASSIST WITH TRANSPORT OF BATTLE FATIGUE CASUALTIES IN GENERAL PURPOSE VEHICLES.

S5/G5 CIVIL AFFAIRS

- RECOGNIZE AND MEDIATE STRESS ISSUES BETWEEN US PERSONNEL AND THE LOCAL POPULATION.
- COORDINATE FOR HOST-NATION SUPPORT.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

- ASSURE THE UNIT GETS PROPER RECOGNITION FOR ITS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE US MEDIA.
 - ASSIST THE COMMANDER IN DETERMINING INFORMATION NEEDS OF SOLDIERS.
 - ASSIST THE COMMANDER IN MESSAGE AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT.
 - FACILITATE COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS.
 - SERVE AS PRIMARY INTERFACE BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND CIVILIAN MEDIA.
-

e. *Chaplains' Responsibilities.* Chaplains, especially those in unit ministry teams, have extremely important responsibilities. See Table 1-5 for chaplains' responsibilities. For additional information on the unit ministry teams, see Appendix D.

f. *Unit Medical Personnel's Responsibilities.* Unit medical personnel assist commanders and NCOs in the control of stressors. See Table 1-6, page 1-16, for combat stress control responsibilities.

1-8. Primary Responsibility-Combat Stress Control/Mental Health Personnel

Combat stress control is the primary responsibility-in peace as well as in war-of the mental health team. While the chain of command and NCO chain of support have ultimate responsibility for stress control, the unit leaders must give primary attention to accomplishing their unit's mission. Headquarters staffs and unit chaplains and medical personnel also have other primary missions which must

come first. Sustaining military performance, preventing stress casualties, and treating stress symptoms are the primary missions for Army combat stress control units and personnel.

a. *Combat Stress Control Organization.* As defined in Army Regulation (AR) 40-216, the mental health team consists of Army psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, social work officers, occupational therapy officers, psychiatric nurses, and their enlisted counterparts. Mental health personnel are organized into organic mental health sections in the main support medical companies of divisions and the medical companies of separate brigades. In both the corps and the COMMZ, the mental health sections are organic to the area support medical battalion. Mental health staff sections in the medical command, medical brigade, and medical group monitor and coordinate combat stress control support. The medical combat stress control units (companies and detachments) are a corps and COMMZ asset. They are designed to divide into mobile, modular combat stress control teams. The teams provide combat stress control support throughout the corps and routinely deploy forward to reinforce mental health section personnel in the division and brigade areas. The philosophy and the organizational and operational concept for combat stress control are reviewed in Appendix B.

b. *Combat Stress Control /Mental Health Team Responsibilities.* Table I-7, page I-17, summarizes the mission and responsibilities of combat stress control/mental health personnel in combat stress control.

1-9. Effective Combat Stress Control Program

Without an effective combat stress control program, combat stress can be a "war-stopper" for our soldiers. This may be by way of a high number of battle fatigue casualties during and after intense critical battles. It may be by way of misconduct stress behaviors which undermine the objectives and the will to persist in operations other than war (conflict). Maximizing the amount of combat stress experienced by our forces is one of the main objectives of the enemy. An effective combat stress control program requires participation at all levels. It is implemented by command authority. It is supported by commanders, leaders, staffs, chaplains, physicians, and health care providers and should be facilitated by mental health/combat stress control personnel and units. Through these actions we can control the effects combat stress has on the accomplishment of unit missions by --

- Identifying and controlling stress factors (stressors).
- Reducing number of battle fatigue casualties and misconduct stress behaviors.
- Reducing recovery time for battle fatigue casualties.

An effective combat stress control program focuses the effects of combat stress toward increasing positive stress responses while decreasing disruptive stress. It reduces the possibilities of stress becoming a war-stopper for the US.

Table 1-5. Chaplains' Responsibilities for Combat Stress Control


-
- PROVIDE RELIGIOUS SUPPORT AND THE MINISTRY OF PRESENCE (BEING WITH THE SOLDIERS) TO ALL SOLDIERS IN THE UNIT.
 - ADVISE COMMAND ON SPIRITUAL, MORAL, AND MORALE ISSUES AS A SPECIAL STAFF OFFICER.
 - HELP SOLDIERS TO BE SPIRITUALLY STRONG TO FACE THE MORAL AND ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND PARADOXES OF HUMAN COMBAT.
 - ENCOURAGE SOLDIERS TO SHARE FEELINGS AFTER COMBAT.
 - ENCOURAGE CONTINUED PERFORMANCE OF DUTY.
 - RECOGNIZE STRESS SYMPTOMS, PROVIDE IMMEDIATE SOLACE, AND RECOMMEND FURTHER EVALUATION AND TREATMENT WHEN APPROPRIATE.
 - KNOW AND PROVIDE INFORMATION TO UNIT LEADERS ON COMBAT STRESS CONTROL TEAM LOCATIONS AND CAPABILITIES.
 - PROVIDE ASSISTANCE WITH INTEGRATING RECOVERED STRESS CASUALTIES BACK INTO THEIR UNITS.
 - MINISTER TO THE SICK AND DYING.
 - ASSIST SURVIVORS WITH GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT.
-

Table 1-6. Unit Medical Personnel's Responsibilities for Combat Stress Control

-
- ADVISE AND INFORM LEADERS AND SOLDIERS/PATIENTS ON STRESS.
 - ENCOURAGE HEALTHY FITNESS OF THE SOLDIERS; ASSIST LEADERS WITH AFTER-ACTION DEBRIEFINGS, SLEEP PLANS, HYGIENE, NUTRITION, AND HYDRATION.
 - DETECT EXCESS STRESS EARLY AND INTERVENE. WHEN FEASIBLE, TREAT AND RELEASE SOLDIERS BACK TO THE SMALL UNIT OR TO REST IN THE SMALL UNIT'S HIGHER HEADQUARTERS (1 TO 2 DAYS MAXIMUM) BEFORE RETURNING TO DUTY.
 - HOLD THE STRESS CASES WHO CANNOT RETURN IMMEDIATELY TO THEIR UNITS AND GIVE BRIEF (1 TO 3 DAY) RESTORATION IN MEDICAL HOLDING FACILITIES.
 - REFER (EVACUATE) TEMPORARILY UNMANAGEABLE STRESS CASES BUT ONLY TO THE NEXT MEDICAL ECHELON OR TO THE NEAREST COMBAT STRESS CONTROL TEAMS.
 - KNOW AND PROVIDE INFORMATION TO UNIT LEADERS ON COMBAT STRESS CONTROL TEAM LOCATIONS AND CAPABILITIES.
 - PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION, IF POSSIBLE, FOR COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PERSONNEL WHEN THEY PROVIDE CONSULTATION TO UNITS.
 - BE ALERT FOR STRESS SYMPTOMS IN ALL PHYSICALLY INJURED AND ILL SOLDIERS (BOTH RETURN-TO-DUTY AND EVACUATED TO CONUS CASES) AND INITIATE IMMEDIATE TREATMENT.
 - PROVIDE QUALITY HEALTH SERVICE SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF PREVENTIVE ACTIONS, ROUTINE CARE, EMERGENCY TREATMENT, AND CONVALESCENT CARE FOR RETURN TO DUTY OR EVACUATION.
-

NOTE: When soldiers know that they will receive timely medical care if wounded, injured, or ill—that is a powerful stress controller.

Table 1-7. Combat Stress Control Unit and Mental Health/Combat Stress Control Personnel's Responsibilities

-
- BE THE ARMY'S ORGANIZATIONAL MEMORY AND ADVOCATE FOR STRESS CONTROL ISSUES.
 - BE PROACTIVE AND MOBILE AND PRESENT WITH THE TROOPS.
 - BE IDENTIFIED WITH SUPPORTED UNIT AND TRUSTED BY ITS LEADERS.
 - PROVIDE CONSULTATION TO LEADERS, CHAPLAINS, MEDICAL PERSONNEL, AND STAFFS INCLUDING—
 - TECHNICAL SUPERVISION AND TRAINING.
 - CASE EVALUATION AND ADVICE.
 - PERSONNEL RELIABILITY SCREENING.
 - INFORMATION BRIEFINGS.
 - IDENTIFICATION OF STRESSORS.
 - ANALYSIS OF STRESSORS.
 - STRESS CONTROL TECHNIQUES.
 - SLEEP PLANNING.
 - SUICIDE PREVENTION.
 - SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION.
 - FAMILY ISSUES.
 - OTHER AREAS AS REQUIRED.
 - STAFF PLANNING FOR COMBAT STRESS CONTROL IN ALL OPERATIONS, INCLUDING PEACETIME.
 - SURVEYS OF STRESS IN THE UNIT, ITS COHESION, AND READINESS.
 - TRANSITION WORKSHOPS; ENHANCED ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTION.
 - COORDINATION FOR UNIT, FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS, AND SUPPORT AGENCIES.
 - EMPHASIS ON PREVENTION OF STRESS CASUALTIES AND ON TREATMENT IN OR CLOSE TO THE UNIT.
 - ASSISTING THE RETURN TO DUTY AND REINTEGRATION OF RECOVERED CASUALTIES INTO THEIR ORIGINAL OR NEW UNITS AND JOBS.
 - PROVIDE REORGANIZATION/RECONSTITUTION SUPPORT FOR SEVERELY ATTRITED UNITS.
 - PROVIDE CRITICAL EVENTS DEBRIEFINGS FOLLOWING DISASTERS OR ACCIDENTS.
 - PROVIDE PROXIMATE NEUROPSYCHIATRIC TRIAGE (SORTING BASED ON HOW FAR FORWARD THE OVERSTRESSED SOLDIER CAN BE TREATED); SEPARATE OTHER CASES WITH SERIOUS PHYSICAL OR MENTAL ILLNESS FOR EVACUATION.
 - SUPERVISE OR PROVIDE 1- TO 3-DAY RESTORATION TREATMENT FOR BATTLE FATIGUE CASUALTIES AT MEDICAL FACILITIES CLOSE TO THE SOLDIER'S UNITS.
 - PROVIDE LONGER RECONDITIONING FOR SLOW-TO-IMPROVE CASES AT A SECURE LOCATION, USUALLY IN THE CORPS (FOR 4 TO 14 DAYS) AND COMMZ (FOR UP TO 28 DAYS) DEPENDING ON THE THEATER EVACUATION POLICY.
 - SUPERVISE OR PROVIDE STABILIZATION FOR ACUTELY DISRUPTIVE CASES AND EVALUATE FOR FURTHER TREATMENT AND EITHER RETURN TO DUTY OR EVACUATE TO CONUS.
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FM 22-51

CHAPTER 2 STRESS AND COMBAT PERFORMANCE

Section I. STRESS TERMINOLOGY AND THE STRESS CONCEPT

2-1. Introduction

The understanding of the stress process has been refined over time by research and experience, leaving some terms obsolete. This chapter establishes how the Army's combat stress control concept currently defines and interprets stress terminology.

2-2. Understanding of Interactions

- a. *Stressors.* A stressor is any event or situation which requires a nonroutine change in adaptation or behavior. Often it is unfamiliar or creates conflict among motives within the individual. It may pose a challenge or a threat to the individual's well-being or self-esteem. Stressors may be positive or negative (for example, promotion to new responsibilities or threat of imminent death).
- b. *Combat Stressors.* Combat stressors are any stressors occurring during the course of combat-related duties, whether due to enemy action or other sources. Combat duties do not necessarily involve being shot at and may be carried on even in "safe" areas far from the enemy. Many Stressors in combat duties come from the soldier's own unit, leaders, and mission demands. They may also come from the conflict between mission demands and the soldier's home life.
- c. *Stress.* Stress is the internal process of preparing to deal with a stressor. Stress involves the physiological reflexes which ready the body for fight or flight. Examples of those reflexes are increased nervous system arousal, release of adrenaline into the bloodstream, changes in blood flow to different parts of the body, and so forth. However, stress is not synonymous with arousal or anxiety. Stress involves physical and mental processes which, at times, suppress arousal and anxiety. Stress also involves the accompanying emotional responses and the automatic perceptual and cognitive processes for evaluating the uncertainty or threat. These automatic processes may be instinctive or learned.
- d. *Stress Appraisal.* Stress may or may not involve conscious awareness of the threat, but the stressor must be perceived at some level to cause stress. The amount of stress experienced depends much on the individual's appraisal of the stressor and its context, even if that appraisal is wrong. The stress process includes psychological defenses which may filter the perception and appraisal to shield the individual from perceiving more threat than he is ready to tolerate.
- e. *Physical Stressors Versus Mental Stressors.* A distinction can be made between those Stressors which are physical and those which are mental.

(1) A physical stressor is one which has a direct effect on the body. This may be an external environmental condition or the internal physical/physiologic demands of the human body.

(2) A mental stressor is one in which only information reaches the brain with no direct physical impact on the body. This information may place demands on either the cognitive systems (thought processes) or the emotional system (feeling responses, such as anger or fear) in the brain. Often, reactions are evoked from both the cognitive and the emotional systems.

f. *Stress Behaviors*. These are stress related actions that can be observed by others; for example, moving or keeping still, speaking or not speaking. The behaviors may be intended to overcome and turn off a stressor, to escape it, or to adapt to it. They may simply reflect or relieve the tension generated by the internal stress process. Any of these different types of stress behavior may be successful, unsuccessful, or not influence the stressful situation at all. They may make the stressor worse. They may resolve one stressor but create new stressors.

g. *Combat Stress*. This is the complex and constantly changing result of all the stressors and stress processes inside the soldier as he performs the combat-related mission. At any given time in each soldier, stress is the result of the complex interaction of many mental and physical stressors.

2-3. Discussion of Physical Versus Mental Stressors

a. Table 2-1 gives examples of the two types of physical stressors (environmental and physiological) and the two types of mental stressors (cognitive and emotional).

Table 2-1. Types of Physical and Mental Stressors

PHYSICAL STRESSORS	MENTAL STRESSORS
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL</p> <p>HEAT, COLD, OR WETNESS VIBRATION, NOISE, BLAST HYPOXIA (INSUFFICIENT OXYGEN), FUMES, POISONS, CHEMICALS DIRECTED-ENERGY WEAPONS/DEVICES IONIZING RADIATION INFECTIOUS AGENTS/DISEASES SKIN IRRITANTS OR CORROSIVES PHYSICAL WORK BRIGHT LIGHT, DARKNESS, HAZE, AND OBSCURATION DIFFICULT OR ARDUOUS TERRAIN</p> <p>PHYSIOLOGICAL</p> <p>SLEEP DEBT DEHYDRATION MALNUTRITION, POOR HYGIENE MUSCULAR AND AEROBIC FATIGUE IMPAIRED IMMUNE SYSTEM OVERUSE OR UNDERUSE OF MUSCLES, ORGAN SYSTEMS ILLNESS OR INJURY</p>	<p>COGNITIVE</p> <p>INFORMATION: TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE SENSORY OVERLOAD VERSUS DEPRIVATION AMBIGUITY, UNCERTAINTY, ISOLATION TIME PRESSURE VERSUS WAITING UNPREDICTABILITY RULES OF ENGAGEMENT, DIFFICULT JUDGMENTS ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS HARD CHOICES VERSUS NO CHOICES RECOGNITION OF IMPAIRED FUNCTIONING</p> <p>EMOTIONAL</p> <p>FEAR- AND ANXIETY-PRODUCING THREATS (OF INJURY, DISEASE, PAIN, FAILURE, LOSS, PERSONAL OR MISSION FAILURE) GRIEF-PRODUCING LOSSES (BEREAVEMENT) RESENTMENT, ANGER- AND RAGE-PRODUCING FRUSTRATION, THREAT, LOSS, AND GUILT BOREDOM-PRODUCING INACTIVITY CONFLICTING MOTIVES (WORRIES ABOUT HOME, DIVIDED LOYALTIES) SPIRITUAL CONFRONTATION OR TEMPTATION CAUSING LOSS OF FAITH INTERPERSONAL FEELINGS</p>

NOTE: THE ABOVE STRESSORS MAY ACT SINGLY OR INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER TO BE COMBAT STRESSORS.

b. The physical stressors evoke specific stress reflexes. For example, cold causes shivering and decreased blood flow to skin and extremities; heat causes sweating and increased blood flow to skin. These stress reflexes can maintain internal balance and comfort up to a point but then may be exceeded.

c. The distinction, however, between physical and mental stressors is rarely clear cut.

(1) Mental stressors can also produce the same stress reflexes as do some physical stressors; for example, decreased blood flow to skin, increased sweating, adrenaline release, and pupil size. These reflexes can markedly increase or decrease the individual's vulnerability to specific physical stressors. The mental stressors also presumably cause changes in brain chemistry (involving the neurotransmitter chemicals in the brain).

(2) Physical stressors are also mental stressors when they provide information to the brain which creates a mental demand or poses a threat to well-being. Even if a physical stressor is not a threat to life and health, the discomfort, distraction, and performance degradation it causes may be emotionally upsetting. Therefore, physical stressors, too, can produce the nonspecific arousal reflexes. Heat, cold, dehydration, toxic chemicals, and other

physical stressors can also interfere directly with brain functioning; they can impair perceptual and cognitive mental abilities, thus increasing the stresses. Light, noise, discomfort, and anxiety provoking information may interfere with sleep, which is essential to maintain brain efficiency and mental performance over time.

d. Because of this intermeshing of physical and mental stressors and stress reflexes, no great effort needs to be invested in distinguishing them in military contexts until the physical stressors and stress reflexes become so severe that they warrant specific (and perhaps emergency) protective measures and treatment. Prior to that stage, unit leaders and medical and mental health personnel should assume that both physical and mental stresses are usually present and interacting within all unit personnel. Guidelines for controlling both physical and mental stressors at the same time should be contained in the tactical standing operating procedure (TSOP), if possible.

2-4. Positive Stress

a. Stress is not necessarily bad or harmful. Positive stress (or eustress) is that degree of stress which is necessary to sustain and improve tolerance to stress without overdoing the stress experience. Some level of stress is helpful and even necessary to health. This is especially clear for some physical stressors to which the body can acclimatize. To achieve greater tolerance or acclimatization to a physical stressor, a progressively greater exposure is required. This exposure should be sufficient to produce more than the routine stress reflexes. Well-known examples of acclimatization are heat acclimatization, cardiovascular (aerobic) fitness, and muscle strength. These examples are so important to combat stress control that they are worth reviewing. The process of improving tolerance to stressors through progressive exposure to those stressors will also be true of cognitive-emotional stressors.

(1) *Heat acclimatization.* You cannot become fully acclimatized to heat by just lying around in hot conditions. You have to perform physical exercise in the heat to stress the body's temperature regulation system. At first, the body may overreact with excessive sweating and heart rate. As acclimatization occurs, the body becomes more efficient at cooling itself. However, acclimation has a maximum level. If you stop exercising in the heat, you will gradually lose the acclimatization you have gained. Mission-oriented protective posture (MOPP) training should be considered as a part of the acclimatization program.

(2) *Aerobic fitness.* It is well known that you can become aerobically fit only by exerting yourself to progressively greater degrees of physical effort. One way is to enter into 20-minute (or more) exercise programs of jogging, running, bicycling, swimming, or

special aerobic exercises each day. Any physical effort which sufficiently raises heart rate and respiratory rate and works up a sweat for 20 minutes or more will increase your tolerance. In other words, you must stress the system. After doing that for several days, the same effort raises heart rate and sweating only a little. You become less short of breath, and the effort seems much easier. To become more aerobically fit, you have to increase the work stressor even more until the body again shows the stress of increased heart rate, shortness of breath, and sweating. If you stop exercising aerobically for weeks or months, your improved aerobic fitness will gradually be lost.

(3) *Muscle strength.* Body builders increase their muscle mass by lifting progressively heavier weights or working against progressively greater resistance on exercise machines. In order to increase muscle strength, you have to increase the stressor (the weight lifted) and the stress (the physiological increased effort within the muscle cells). After the muscle has become accustomed to lifting a given weight, it no longer seems like a great effort. There is little stress taking place in the muscle. The muscle will merely maintain its strength and not get any stronger with repeated exposure. If you stop doing even that amount of lifting, your muscles will get flabby again over time. A good maxim is, "If you do not use it, you will lose it."

b. It is important to understand that stressors which overstrain the adaptive capability of the body (whether or not they cause pain) do not hasten acclimatization or increase tolerance to the stressor. They often retard it and may even permanently impair future acclimatization. Consider the examples of the physical stressors discussed above.

(1) Heat acclimatization is not speeded by getting heat cramps or heat exhaustion. Neither is it significantly slowed, although the person's self-confidence and motivation to try again may be impaired. However, people who are driven to the stage of heatstroke and survive will forever be physically less tolerant to heat. They will be more likely to develop heatstroke in the future if exposed to heat.

(2) Runners or body builders who push too hard early in training may not feel severe pain at the time. Hours later, however, they may develop muscle swelling, ache, and stiffness. At best, this will take days to recover to the point where the athlete can even continue with the exercise regimen. At worst, the damaged muscles may break down and release the substance myoglobin into the bloodstream which can permanently damage or destroy the kidneys. Excessive painful stress on bones, joints, and ligaments does not make them grow stronger but instead causes stress

fractures, sprains, tears, and other damage that may require months of reduced activity to heal.

(3) The issue for the master fitness trainers is how to keep the physical work stressors and stress in the positive or eustress range which increases strength and fitness. They must control the stressors and stress so they are not extreme-too little or too much.

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WARNING

Unconditioned, unacclimatized troops should not be overextended in training as this could cause severe injury or even death. A special physical training program will be required.

c. Positive stress also applies to mental stressors (cognitive and emotional), as well as to physical stressors (environmental and physiological). Appropriate exposure to mental/ emotional stressors is necessary to increase tolerance to them.

(1) Armies have known for centuries about the positive effects of stress in preparing soldiers for combat. In old-style basic training (prior to 1970), the drill sergeant deliberately made himself more fearsome than death itself so that the trainee would learn to respond automatically, even in a state of terror. That technique is not useful today because modern war requires more small unit cohesion, trust between leaders and those led, and initiative even on the part of the junior enlisted soldier. The modern drill sergeant must, instead, require the trainees to meet difficult (stressful) standards and work with the trainees to assure that they master them. The result is a well-earned sense of confidence in self, comrades, and leaders that can be applied to future demands.

(2) The Army knows that airborne and air assault training are not just intended to teach the skills needed to arrive on a battlefield after jumping from a low-flying aircraft or repelling from a helicopter. Their greater value comes from requiring soldiers to confront and master their extremely strong, instinctive fear of heights under circumstances which are deliberately stressful at the time. During training, this fear builds self-confidence and a sense of special identity on completion. (In fact, the training itself is not exceedingly dangerous, statistically speaking. However, the possibility of death does exist if you are extremely unlucky or fail to do the task correctly. This can contribute to additional stress.)

(3) Ranger school is a clear example of the Army's recognition of the benefits of positive stress. A generic ranger course objective would read: Perform complex and difficult physical and mental task under great pressure, sleep loss, water and food deprivation, and physical fatigue. No one coasts through ranger school. If anyone seems to be coasting through, the trained ranger cadre will increase the demand on that person until he, too, reaches the stage of stress where he realizes he cannot get through it all alone. Ranger school teaches small teams and their rotating leaders how to control stress in all the team members so the team accomplishes the mission. The training gives the individual soldier confidence, but even more, an awareness of how stress works in oneself and others. It teaches stress control, not stress reduction. Often the need for the team and its individual members is to play different mental and physical stressors against each other. This is done by increasing some stressors while decreasing others to keep the team on its mission and to keep individual soldiers from giving up.

d. To some degree, acclimatization to mental (cognitive/emotional) stressors also shares that "use it or lose it" feature which is true for adaptation to physical stressors. The airborne qualified trooper may experience more unpleasant stress symptoms when jumping after not having jumped for many months. The physician may find the stress unexpectedly higher when performing a potentially risky patient-care procedure that was once so frequently practiced that it had seemed to involve no stress at all but which has not been performed for some time. However, the memory of successfully mastering the stressor in the past usually speeds up the return of adaptation.

e. Tolerance to mental stressors is increased by successfully facing and mastering similar stressors (just as tolerance to physical stressors is). However, being overwhelmed by emotional or mental stress may temporarily or permanently impair future tolerance (just as exceeding the ability to cope with physical stressors may). Up to a point, mental stress (even uncomfortable mental stress) may increase tolerance to future stress without any current impairment. A higher level may cause temporary overstrain but may heal as strong or stronger than ever with rest and restorative processing. More severe overstrain, however, may permanently weaken tolerance to future mental stress. As with some cases of damage from physical stress, the harm done by mental stress may not be apparent at the time. It may only be apparent later. There is reason to believe that immediate preventive measures or treatment can greatly reduce the potential for chronic disability, even in cases of extreme emotional overstrain.

2-5. Relationship of Stress to Task Performance

Stress is an internal process which presumably evolves because it helps the individual to function better, stay alive, and cope successfully with stressors. However, there is an optimal range of arousal (or motivation or stress) for any given task.

- a. If there is too little arousal, the job is done haphazardly or not at all because the individual is easily distracted, makes errors of omission, or falls asleep. If arousal becomes too intense, the individual may be too distractible or too focused on one aspect of the task. He may have difficulty with fine motor coordination and with discriminating when and how to act. If the individual is unfamiliar with his own stress reflexes and perceives them as dangerous (or incapacitating, or as a threat to self-esteem), the stress itself can become a stressor and magnify itself.
- b. With extreme arousal, the individual may freeze (become immobile or petrified by fear). Alternately, he may become agitated and flee in disoriented panic. If stress persists too long, it can cause physical and mental illnesses. Extreme stress with hopelessness can even result in rapid death, either due to sympathetic nervous system overstimulation (such as stroke or heart attack) or due to sympathetic nervous system shutdown (not simply exhaustion). An individual giving up can literally stop the heart from beating.
- c. The original purpose of the stress reaction was to keep the person alive. The military requirement for the stress process is different. It is to keep the soldier in that range of physiological, emotional, and cognitive mobilization which best enables him to accomplish the military mission, whether that contributes to individual survival or not. This optimal range of stress differs from task to task. Tasks which require heavy but gross muscular exertion are performed best at high levels of arousal (Figure 2-1). Tasks that require fine muscle coordination and clear thinking (such as walking point on a booby-trapped jungle trail, or distinguishing subtle differences between friendly and enemy targets in a night-vision gun sight) or that require inhibiting action (such as waiting alertly in ambush) will be disrupted unless the stress process is kept finely tuned. If the stress process allows too much or too little arousal or if arousal does not lessen when it is no longer needed, stress has become harmful.

2-6. Fatigue

Fatigue means weariness and/or decreased performance capability due to hard or prolonged work or effort. It reflects the stage where the energy mobilized by the stress process is beginning to run down. If the effort continues, the fatigue can build to the point of exhaustion.

- a. *Fatigue can be produced by both physical and mental tasks.* A well-known example of physical fatigue is muscle tiredness. This can be limited

to specific muscles which have been overworked. Another example is aerobic fatigue (where the whole body is short of oxygen and perhaps blood sugar, is probably overheated, and is wanting to rest).

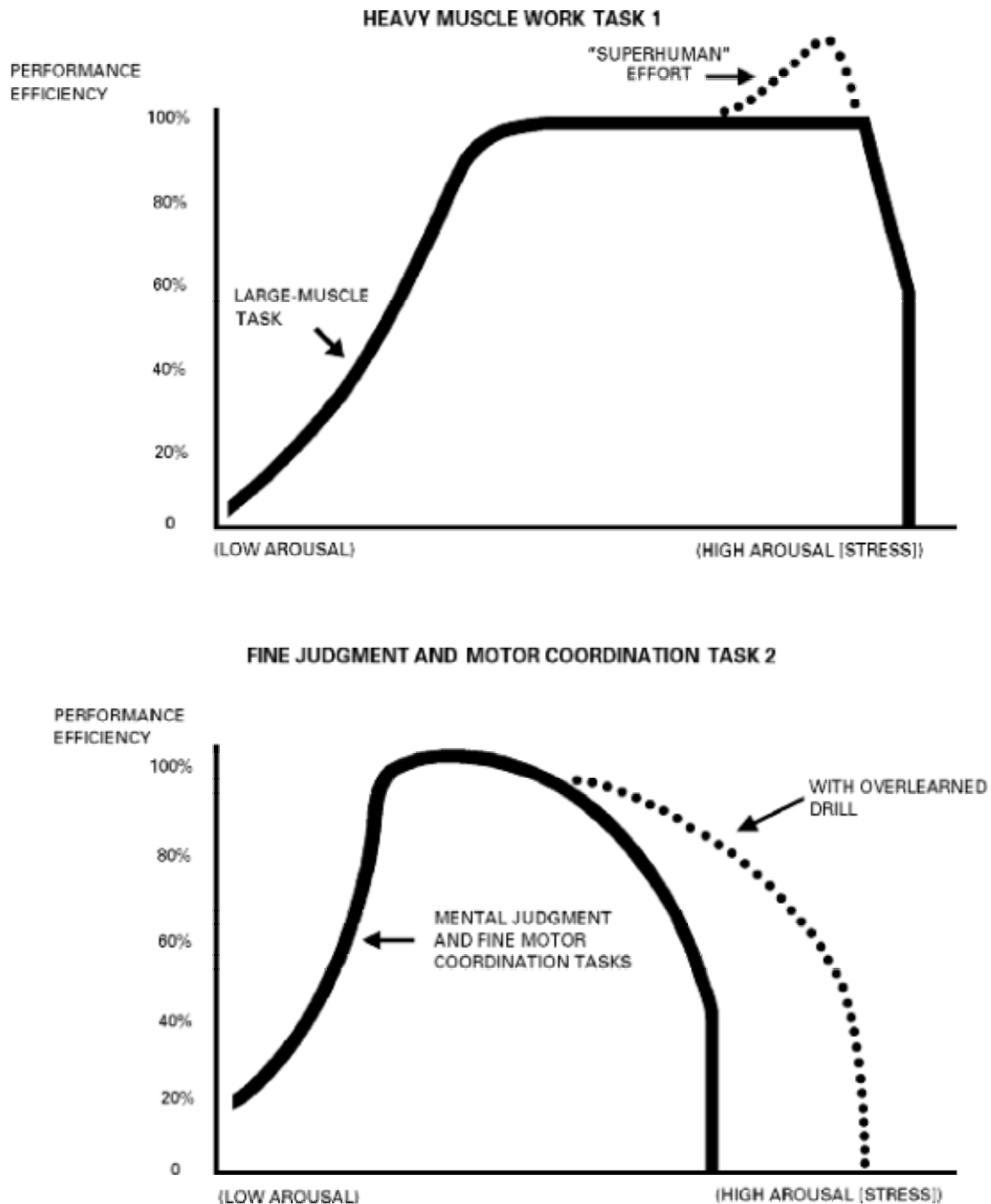


Figure 2-1. Change in performance with increasing arousal (stress) for two types of tasks.

b. Sleep loss produces a different kind of fatigue which is primarily mental. The sleep-deprived person has trouble keeping his mind focused although he has no decrease in muscular or aerobic work capacity. People with sleep-loss fatigue usually appear tired and slowed down, or they may also be speeded up, hyperactive, and irritable.

c. Continued mental effort on a specific task, whether it is a task requiring much thinking or constant attention, produces mental fatigue. That is, performance gets progressively worse with time, and the person wishes he could stop to do something else. Even a few minutes of break, while the mind does some quite different mental tasks, substantially relieves the mental fatigue and improves the performance.

d. Physical illness can also bring on fatigue. People who have ever had the flu or even just a cold know how quickly one tires. They only want to rest or sleep.

e. Intense emotions also produce fatigue. This is especially true of anxiety and fear because they arouse the fight or flight reflexes of the physical stress process. This will be discussed later in justifying the use of the term *battle fatigue*.

f. The level of fatigue experienced may be influenced by --

- Work intensity.
- Task difficulty.
- Duration of sustained effort.
- General well-being of the individual.

Fatigue can also be influenced by the level of preparedness to perform the specific task.

(1) For physical fatigue: A marathon runner may have strong legs, superb aerobic fitness, great health, and self-confidence, but too little arm and shoulder strength to be able to chin himself even once before being stopped by fatigue.

(2) For emotional fatigue: A healthy, confident soldier may have learned to carry his Dragon missile and guide it to its target easily in peacetime training. But if he has never learned to control his own fear, he may find himself too quickly fatigued to even carry the weight, let alone keep the missile on target for 10 seconds while under real, lethal enemy fire. He may, however, still be able to perform simple tasks. In WWII, the following observations and conclusion were made:

(a) In the fighting for Kwajalein Atoll, troops were halted three times by enemy fire. Their energy was exhausted even though they suffered no casualties and had moved fewer than two miles. In the Normandy invasion, a strong infantry company with many vigorous young men hit the beach still fresh. Under intense fire, they found they had to drag their heavy machine guns across the beach a few feet at a time; when in training, they had been able to carry the same loads on the run.

(b) The Army reached the following conclusion from those observations: Fear and fatigue effect the body in similar ways. Fear, like physical work, drains the body of energy. This creates a self-perpetuating cycle. The overloaded soldier, feeling tired, becomes more susceptible to fear. The more fearful he becomes, the weaker he feels, and the more quickly he becomes fatigued.

2-7. Stages of Adaptation to a Threatening Situation

- a. The stage of alarm (usually brief) is when the fight or flight response is extremely active. Performance is likely to be impaired unless the soldiers' responses are simple and instinctive (like running or freezing) or well drilled.
- b. The stage of resistance is achieved if the subject successfully copes with the threat. The overarousal moderates and the sufferer begins to actively try to overcome or escape the stressor or to adapt to it. Performance is often enhanced in the stage of resistance. If the stressor is mastered or adapted to, the person either returns to the baseline level of stress or may have some residual stress while working through the unpleasant memories and their long term implications.
- c. The stages of exhaustion may occur if the victim of stress is unable to escape, overcome, or tolerate a severe stressor. Performance deteriorates and may cease altogether. The victim may develop a stress-related illness and can even die of stress.

Section II. COMBAT PERFORMANCE AND COMBAT STRESS BEHAVIORS

2-8. Phases of Adaptation to Combat

During the first time in battle for soldiers, their combat performance is usually lower than it was in precombat training. The novice soldiers are also at relatively high risk of being killed or wounded. This is partly because they have not yet learned to identify and respond automatically to the true dangers (such as the specific sounds of incoming artillery or mortar rounds). Under extreme stress, they may experience difficulty with focusing their attention and remembering what they were taught in training. Their ineffectiveness may also be caused by fear-induced fatigue. First-battle soldiers are at high risk of becoming battle fatigue casualties. Soldiers in their first time under fire are likely to experience

high anxiety (the stages of alarm) (see Figure 2-2[A]). Poor showing on first exposure to real battle can be reduced by providing tough, realistic training (especially battle drills under high stress), but it cannot be totally prevented.

a. *The Experienced Veteran.* If the soldier does not become a casualty in the first battle, his combat skills will improve quickly over the next few days. His skills continue to improve gradually over the next weeks until he is as good as he can get. An experienced soldier gains confidence in his skill, comrades, and leaders (see Figure 2-2[B]). For him, the stage of alarm is mostly in anticipation. He responds selectively and automatically to the truly dangerous sounds and cues of the battlefield. When the action starts, he immediately achieves the stage of resistance and is remarkably calm as he focuses on his job. However, the veteran is likely to have a considerable rebound of arousal and anxiety when the fight is over. Not all veteran soldiers ever achieve the state of really low fear in action. Some drop to mid levels, yet still perform their duties effectively.

b. *Sustainment of Optimal Combat Skills.* Combat skills and high stress tolerance are maintained when frequent successful combat actions occur. If losses in the unit remain low, the veteran can maintain his optimal combat skills for many months. If there is a prolonged cease-fire or if the skilled soldier leaves the combat zone on individual R&R, there may be a brief drop in performance on his return to battle. That drop would be accompanied by a return of the anxiety pattern shown by new soldiers (Figure 2-2[A]) but the anxiety is much briefer. This would be like the anxiety felt by the airborne qualified soldier who is making a jump after not having done so for many months. Predictably, the experienced veteran will regain his combat edge quickly upon returning to battle.

c. *The Overstressed Veteran.* If the unit suffers many casualties, however, and the chance of surviving a long war seems poor, the experienced soldier's combat performance begins to decline. It can occur after 14 to 21 days of cumulative combat or even after only a few days of extremely heavy losses. The overstressed veteran becomes more careful, loses initiative, and may be indecisive when he needs to act quickly. Figure 2-2(C) shows the anxiety pattern of an overstressed soldier who is doubting his chances of survival. There were too many close calls in the last battle; too many of his friends were killed (slowly over time or quickly). Under such stress, he feels his own skills are slipping, and it is just a matter of time before he, too, will surely be killed or maimed. Unless he is given the opportunity and help to reduce arousal level and regain some hope, he will soon fail.

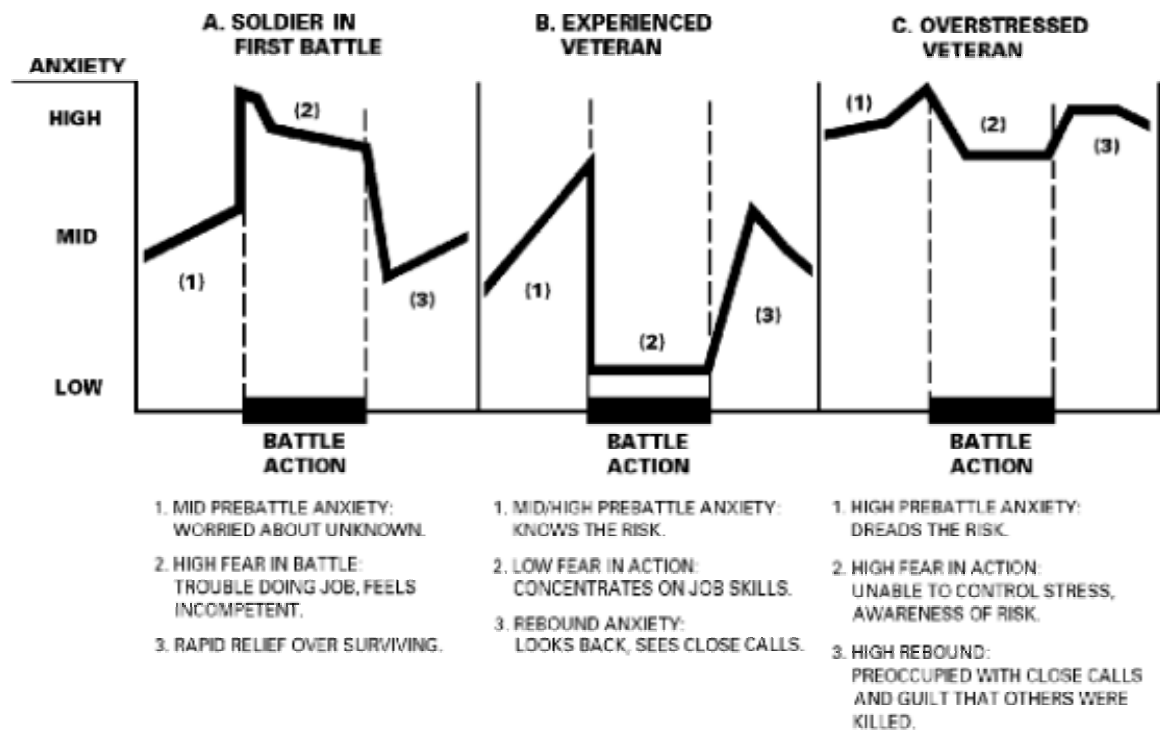


Figure 2-2. Anxiety, fear and arousal at different stages in combat tour.

d. *Decline of Combat Skills.* How quickly performance declines will usually be related to how many casualties have occurred and how close the soldier was to them (both physically and emotionally). The decline may be hastened or slowed by leadership, unit, scenario, and home front factors such as those discussed in later chapters and in Appendix A.

e. *Restoration of Combat Skills.* Rest and recuperation, preferably with other soldiers in the unit, can substantially restore combat proficiency. Rest would also substantially return the anxiety pattern to that of the experienced veteran (Figure 2-2[B]). This recuperation can be accomplished with the help of the medical and combat stress control/mental health personnel at a medical restoration or reconditioning facility.

2-9. Combat Stress Behaviors

a. *Combat Stress Behaviors.* Combat stress behavior is the generic term which covers the full range of behaviors in combat, from behaviors that are highly positive to those that are totally negative. Table 2-2 provides a listing of positive stress responses and behaviors, plus two types of dysfunctional combat stress behaviors—those which are labeled misconduct stress behaviors and those which are labeled battle fatigue.

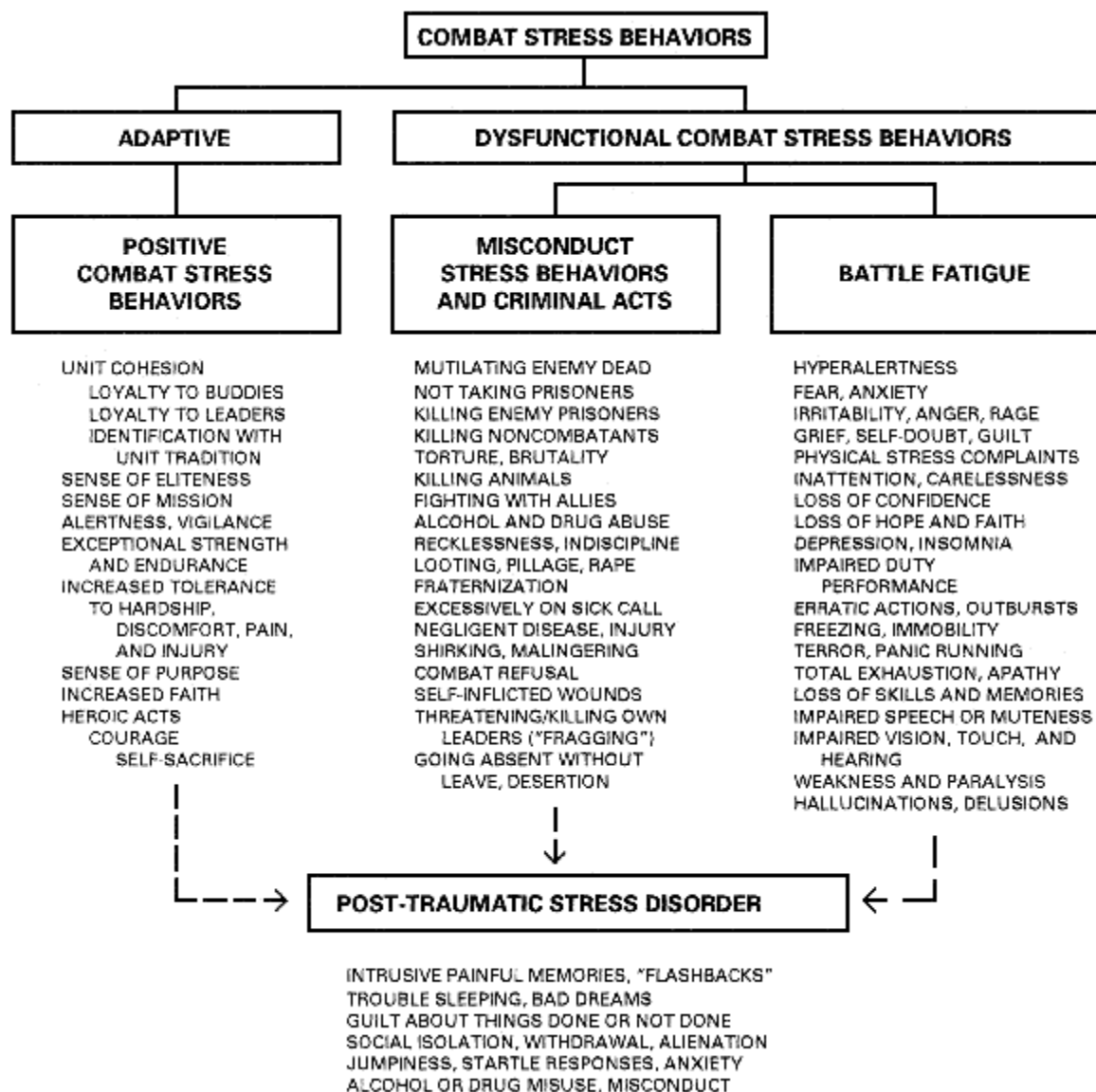
b. *Positive Combat Stress Behaviors.* Positive combat stress behaviors include the heightened alertness, strength, endurance, and tolerance to discomfort which the fight or flight stress response and the stage of

resistance can produce when properly in tune. Examples of positive combat stress behaviors include the strong personal bonding between combat soldiers and the pride and self-identification which they develop with the combat unit's history and mission (unit esprit). These together form unit cohesion-the binding force that keeps soldiers together and performing the mission in spite of danger and death. The ultimate positive combat stress behaviors are acts of extreme courage and action involving almost unbelievable strength. They may even involve deliberate self-sacrifice. Positive combat stress behaviors can be brought forth by sound military training (drill), wise personnel policies, and good leadership. The results are behaviors which are rewarded with praise and perhaps with medals for individual valor and/or unit citations. The positive combat stress behaviors are discussed further in Chapter 3.

c. *Misconduct Stress Behaviors*. Examples of misconduct stress behaviors are listed in the center column of Table 2-2. These range from minor breaches of unit orders or regulations to serious violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and perhaps the Law of Land Warfare. As misconduct stress behaviors, they are most likely to occur in poorly trained, undisciplined soldiers. However, they can also be committed by good, even heroic, soldiers under extreme combat stress. Misconduct stress behavior can be prevented by stress control measures, but once serious misconduct has occurred, it must be punished to prevent further erosion of discipline. Combat stress, even with heroic combat performance, cannot justify criminal misconduct. See Chapter 4 for a discussion of misconduct stress behaviors.

d. *Battle Fatigue*. Battle fatigue is also called combat stress reaction or combat fatigue. See Table 2-2 for examples of battle fatigue. Those battle fatigue behaviors which are listed near the top may accompany excellent combat performance and are often found in heroes, too. These are normal, common signs of battle fatigue. Those that follow are listed in descending order to indicate progressively more serious or warning signs. Warning signs deserve immediate attention by the leader, medic, or buddy to prevent potential harm to the soldier, others, or the mission. Warning signs do not necessarily mean the soldier must be relieved of duty or evacuated if they respond quickly to helping actions. However, soldiers may need evaluation at medical treatment facilities to rule out other physical or mental illness. If the symptoms of battle fatigue persist and make the soldier unable to perform duties reliably, then medical treatment facilities, such as clearing station and specialized combat stress control teams, can provide restorative treatment. At this point, the soldier is a battle fatigue casualty. For those cases, prompt treatment close to the soldier's unit provides the best potential for returning the soldier to duty. See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion of battle fatigue.

Table 2-2. Combat Stress Behaviors



2-10. Overlapping of Combat Stress Behaviors

The distinction between positive combat stress behaviors, misconduct stress behaviors, and battle fatigue is not always clear. Indeed, the three categories of combat stress behaviors may overlap, as diagrammed in Figure 2-3. Soldiers with battle fatigue may show misconduct stress behaviors and vice versa. Heroes who exemplify the positive combat stress behaviors may suffer symptoms of battle fatigue and may even be battle fatigue casualties before or after their heroic deeds. Excellent combat soldiers may commit misconduct stress behaviors in reaction to the stressors of combat before, during, or after their otherwise exemplary performance. Combat stress, even with good combat behavior, does not excuse criminal acts. However, it could be taken into account as an extenuating circumstance for minor (noncriminal) infractions or in determining nonjudicial punishment under Article 16, UCMJ, for minor offenses.

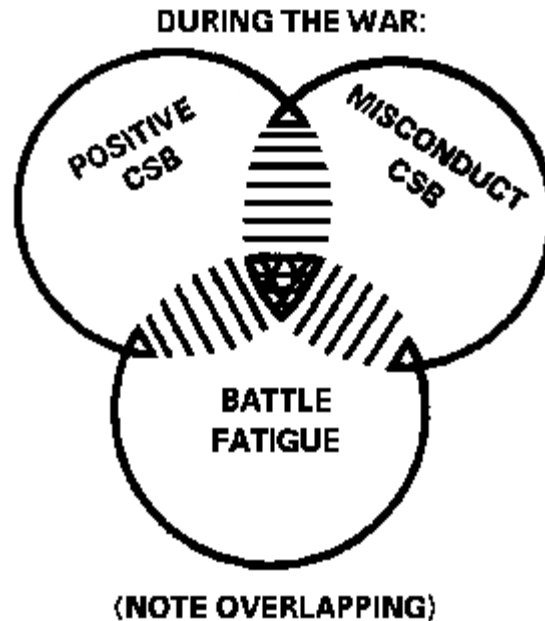


Figure 2-3. Overlapping of combat stress behaviors.

2-11. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-traumatic stress symptoms are normal responses after extremely abnormal and distressing events.

a. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Signs and Symptoms. As with battle fatigue, post-traumatic stress symptoms come in normal/ common and warning signs. These signs and symptoms do not necessarily make the sufferer a casualty or deserve the label of disorder. It is normal for the survivor of one or more horrible events to have painful memories; to have anxiety (perhaps with jumpiness or being on guard); to feel guilt (over surviving or for real acts of omission or commission); and to dream unpleasant dreams about it. This becomes PTSD only when either the pain of the memories or the actions the person takes to escape the memories (such as substance abuse, avoidance of reminders, social estrangement, and withdrawal) interfere with occupational or personal life goals.

b. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Preventive Measures. As with battle fatigue, there is no virtue in suffering, ignoring, neglecting, or hiding post-traumatic stress symptoms. The normal/common signs deserve routine preventive measures, such as talking out and working through the painful memories. The warning signs certainly deserve this attention, as self-aid, buddy aid, and leader aid. Good preventive measures can head off true PTSD which might not show up until years after the incident.

c. Relationship Between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Battle Fatigue. While PTSD and battle fatigue obviously share much in common,

by definition, symptoms are not PTSD until the trauma is over (post). Therefore, this diagnosis should not be made while the soldier continues in, or is expected to return quickly to, the combat mission. As the dotted lines (Table 2-2) show, PTSD can follow battle fatigue (especially if inadequately or incorrectly treated). Israeli studies confirm earlier observations that immediate, far-forward treatment and return to duty protect battle fatigue casualties against subsequent PTSD. Premature evacuation of battle fatigue casualties often results in chronic PTSD. However, most cases of acute, chronic, and delayed PTSD after a war were not battle fatigue casualties during the battles.

d. Relationship Between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Misconduct Stress Behavior. Post-traumatic stress disorder often follows misconduct stress behaviors. It may occur in --

- The victims of others' misconduct.
- Those who committed misconduct under stress and are haunted by guilt later.
- Those who were passive or reluctant participants.
- Those who simply observed severe misconduct and its human consequences.
- Those who were involved as rescuers or care givers.

e. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Positive Combat Stress Behavior. Post-traumatic stress disorder can also occur in soldiers (or veterans and civilians) who showed no maladaptive stress behaviors at the time of the trauma and who showed positive, even heroic, combat stress behaviors. Even heroes can feel delayed grief and survivor guilt for lost buddies or be haunted by the memory of the enemy soldiers they killed in battle.

f. Leader Responsibilities to Prevent Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. During the conflict, commanders and NCOs have the additional responsibility of preventing or minimizing subsequent PTSD. The most important preventive measure is routine after-action debriefing by small teams after any difficult operation (see Chapter 6 for additional discussion). Critical event debriefings led by trained debriefing teams should be scheduled following exceptionally traumatic events. Recommended leader actions are provided in Appendix A. When units or individual soldiers redeploy home from combat, leaders should debrief them and help prepare them for the transition. As Figure 2-4 illustrates, painful memories do not have to become clinical PTSD or misconduct stress behaviors. They can be accepted and diverted into positive growth. Chapter 6 gives more information on PTSD and its prevention and treatment.

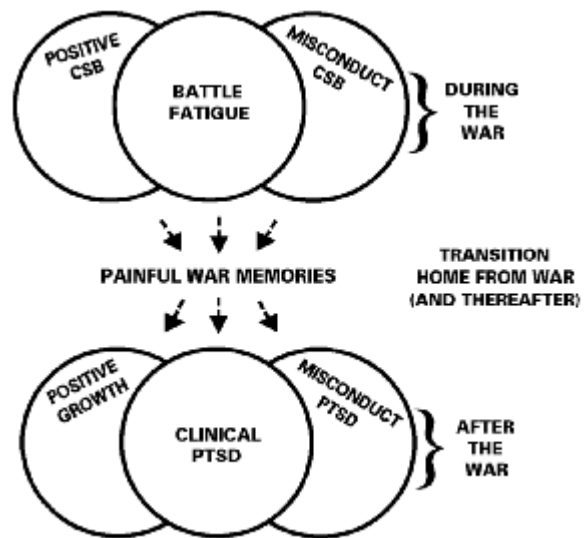


Figure 2-4. Relation between combat stress behaviors and PTSD.

Student Handout 3

This student handout contains an extract from DA PAM 600-63-10.

1 September 1987
Department of the Army Pamphlet
600-63-10
Fit to Win—STRESS MANAGEMENT

The Army Health Promotion Program

Leadership is Key to Preventing Battle

A leader reduces combat stress by preparing himself and the unit for combat. It's Important that he know his job and plan for contingencies. He must maintain control of the unit to maximize its efficiency. Good leaders have few battle fatigue casualties in their units, even under extremely stressful circumstances. Poor leaders tend to have many, along with other "improper behavior" combat stress reactions. Good leaders do the following:

Promote Unit Cohesion

- a. The most important motive which keeps soldiers doing their duty in combat is "Unit Cohesion". Unit cohesion is the personal trust and loyalty among Members of a small unit which makes them prefer to stick together even when that involves great hardship and danger.
- b. Working together to overcome danger and survive is itself a good way to produce cohesion fast. But there are two disadvantages to waiting until the danger is close to start developing cohesion. First, there is the big risk that the danger and stress will break up the insufficiently cohesive team and roll over it; that everyone will simply get killed or develop total battle fatigue. Second, it is possible to develop personally cohesive groups who care only about their own comfort and survival and not about the mission.
- c. The leader needs to encourage as much personal cohesion as possible within the team before going into combat, and be sure that it is strengthened by a sense of the unit's

military identity and its mission. This sense is called "Esprit deCorps" or simply "esprit" (pronounced "espre"). The combination of unit esprit and personal cohesion equals "unit cohesion". Unit cohesion is like reinforced concrete. Cohesion alone is like steel wire mesh; it is hard to break but easy to bend. The esprit is like concrete; it keeps its shape, but shatters easily. Combining the two produces a result that is far stronger than the sum of its parts. It neither breaks nor bends. The following are specific ways to achieve unit cohesion.

d. Insure that new arrivals are welcomed into the group and become known and trusted members quickly. In garrison, appoint a suitable sponsor for each newcomer, and monitor that the sponsor really does show the newcomer around and assist in settling in on the job and in the community. In the combat setting, It is even more important to get the new soldier linked up with an appropriate buddy or buddies. As much as possible, give the newcomers time to develop combat attitudes, skills and cohesion over several days before putting them into an extremely stressful or important situation.

(1) The new soldier hasn't yet established trust and "cohesion" with buddies and leaders. The Israeli study found this to be the second strongest factor in a study which compared battle shock casualties and decorated heroes.

(2) New replacements who have no prior combat experience are at special risk. Not only are they facing extreme stress for the first time, but also the veteran soldiers have little basis on which to trust them. Veteran soldiers who are coming to a new unit after recovering from a wound, or as "survivors" from other units, are also at risk. These veterans may adapt quicker than the new replacements if they don't have too much unresolved battle fatigue.

(3) Soldiers who have just been given

new job responsibilities, such as just being promoted acting NCO, may also be under special stress while they adjust to no longer being just one of the gang.

e. *Keep members of a small team always working together*, under their leader. Assign details and projects to a team, and let its leader organize how it will be done. Similarly, if there is an opportunity to send a group off for R & R, send whole small teams, not a collection of individuals. Use equipment drills, physical fitness exercises, and team sports to promote mutual reliance and closeness within each team, and positive competition and respect among all teams. These activities can be useful to “let off steam”, prevent boredom and get new replacements integrated during times of low mission activity. Praise and reward the teams as well as the individual members for their performance.

f. *Conduct small team “debriefings” after hard actions* (in training and in combat). Bring the troops together to talk about what happened when the situation permits, but while the events are still fresh in their minds. The purpose is to reconstruct what really happened so the team benefits from the lessons learned. (1) By having everyone retell what he saw and did, the “big picture” can be seen and agreed upon by everyone. Feelings of anger and mistrust may go away on their own once the soldier sees how things looked to the others. The soldier’s natural emotions of loss and grief when a buddy gets hit, or guilt when he makes a mistake, usually come out, too, and can be comforted and put into perspective by the rest of the team. (2) The leader’s responsibility is to keep this a positive learning experience in which natural human emotions and mistakes, however painful or “bad”, are accepted as natural. But the focus must always be brought back to the mission, and how we can do it better next time.

g. *Bring the whole unit together*, when

the tactical situation permits, for formations, meals, award ceremonies and other informal occasions which let them get to know the members of the other teams better. Memorial services for the unit’s dead may help the friends of that soldier in grieving, provided the service is done with sensitivity. Even traditional parades and close order drills may have a place in letting individuals see the whole unit working together.

h. *Impart unit pride and identity* by educating the soldiers in the history of the small unit, its parent units, the branch of service and the Army. Don’t just tell about easy successes. Know and retell stories which honor historical examples of soldiers and units (as much like yours as possible) who showed initiative, endurance and resilience, who bounced back from defeat, who overcame heavy odds, or whose self-sacrifice led to eventual triumph of the higher cause.

i. *Encourage unit-centered social interaction* outside duty hours (in garrison or in a combat theater where you are on a 12 hours on/12 hours off duty cycle). Do monitor these activities to discourage drug or alcohol abuse (which tense soldiers may want to use to “unwind”), inappropriate fraternization, or breaking up into cliques or interest groups which exclude or pick on other unit members.

Stabilize the Home Front

Take action to protect soldiers from those “home front” problems that are often the hidden “cause” of the battle fatigue casualty. In garrison, involve the soldiers’ families in unit social activities and teach them about the unit’s mission and history to include them in the sense of unit cohesion. Help soldiers prepare themselves and their families for the disruption and stress of a rapid deployment. Know their personal backgrounds as well as their military skills. Help them use Army and civilian support services when available and draw moral support from the unit. The

unit or post Chaplains and mental health team are also valuable resources.

a. Worrying about what is happening back home distracts soldiers from focusing their psychological defenses on the combat stressors. It creates internal conflict over performing their combat duty and perhaps not surviving to resolve the uncertainties. An Israeli study found this to be the strongest factor which distinguished between soldiers who

became “battle shock” casualties and others who were decorated for heroic acts.

b. The home front problem may be a negative one—a dear John letter, a sick parent or child, or bad debts. Or it may be something positive — just married or just became a parent. All soldiers face potential problems and uncertainties on the home front if the conflict lacks popular support at home.

c. Rapid mobilization and deployment can create home front problems for both Active Component and Reserve Component soldiers. This is especially true if the soldier has noncombatant family members in the combat zone who must be under the NEO plan. This turmoil must be reduced by prior planning which has been communicated to and practiced with the family.

Assume Physical Fitness

a. Physical fitness programs are useful in promoting unit cohesion, but they are also important in themselves as protection against battle fatigue. Being super fit is not a guarantee against disabling battle fatigue, but it does increase self-confidence (and the confidence of buddies), and delays the onset of muscular fatigue. *Not being physically fit* is an invitation for it. Sudden overuse of a cardiovascular system, muscles, joints and bones that have not been prepared for the strain can lead to immediate failure and serious injury. Even if these are avoided, the person will be subject to

days of stiffness, aching and weakness. During this time, unfit soldiers are at very high risk for battle fatigue even if further

demands aren’t made on them.

b. Assure that everyone in the unit has not only aerobic fitness (endurance) but also the necessary muscle strength in the parts of the body which they will use in their combat role. They also need callouses in the right places so they don’t get blisters, and the necessary flexibility and agility for the tasks to be done.

Conduct Tough, Realistic Training

a. A soldier’s ability to withstand stress is increased by a realistic sense of confidence. Confidence in his own ability, in his leadership, and in his equipment plays a role. This confidence is obtained initially through tough, realistic training and later through success on the battlefield. This is as important for Combat Service Support troops as it is for the Combat Arms.

b. “Tough” means hard work and continuous operations under unpleasant weather conditions. “Realistic” means as similar to the combat mission and combat environments as possible, Including the noise, confusion, delays, setbacks and simulated danger. Seek out challenging and difficult environments in training, to increase the unit’s skills and confidence.

c. It is *essential that the final result be success*, not failure. Use the tough, realistic training to achieve the following specific objectives:

d. *Learn each soldier’s strengths and weaknesses.* Maximize those strengths while learning how to minimize the weakness. Identify which are the truly key combat mission tasks. Identify the best qualified soldiers to perform those key tasks. Then cross train additional soldiers to proficiency so that every key task can be performed by several good soldiers.

e. *Talk frankly about the possibility of*

casualties in combat, and of team members being killed. Train junior leaders to take over when senior leaders need sleep or if they become casualties. Talk together within the unit about possible loss of leaders and comrades. It will happen in war (even in Combat Service Support units) and must not come as a surprise.

f. *Practice casualty care and evacuation routinely*. Have everyone know basic life-saving self Aid/buddy Aid. Select the best soldiers for additional “combat lifesaver training”. Practice this, and also practice realistic use of any assigned medical personnel and evacuation of casualties and part of any combat exercise. Practice self Aid/buddy Aid techniques for battle fatigue, too. If you can occasionally get “mouflage kits” to make soldiers appear to have serious battle wounds, this will help harden your soldiers even better to face the real sights of battle.

g. Practice *both “sleep logistics”* (a flexible plan by which everyone gets sufficient sleep) and Counter-Fatigue Measures to use when soldiers must continue to work or fight without enough sleep. Sleep deprivation is not necessary to have battle fatigue, but whenever present, it can be a major contributing factor. The sleep deprived soldier or leader has difficulty thinking and reasoning, and becomes easily confused and overly suggestible. Pessimistic thinking takes hold, and everything seems difficult. Sleep loss alone can cause the tired brain to see things which aren’t there (visual hallucinations) or to perceive things which are there as something totally different. When anxiety and vigilance are added, the soldier may be temporarily unable to distinguish between reality and what he fears. Normal physical symptoms of stress become magnified into disabling illnesses.

(1) If the mission permits, allow everyone 6-10 hours of sleep per 24 hours, preferably but not necessarily in one block. If that is impossible, try to give everyone a minimum of 4 hours in 24, and those with critical mental and vigilance tasks 6 hours.

(2) Assure good sleep before periods of sustained operations. Have everyone catnap during sustained operations, but plan for slow awakening of those who have key mental tasks. Have everyone catch up on sleep after going without.

Conserve the Well-Being of the Troops

a. Ensure the best water, food, *equipment, shelter, sanitation and sleep* possible under the circumstances of the mission. In training, it may be important to seek out stress and discomfort. In combat, never waste the strength of the soldiers for nothing, because there will be many occasions when it will be necessary to accept hardship to gain the advantage. When this happens, explain to the troops why the hardship is necessary.

b. *Dehydration* deserves special mention because it can be very subtle. A stressed soldier under battlefield or heavy work conditions can become very dehydrated without feeling thirsty. An insufficient circulation of thick, dehydrated blood is less able to carry oxygen to the brain and muscles. This results in “instant battle fatigue”. COL (later BG) S.L.A. Marshall, the U.S. Army historian who pioneered the technique of interviewing combat teams while the battle was still going on, discovered that in himself during his first exploratory mission on Kwajalein in World War II. Marshall was a man who was literally “fearless”, so this came as a surprise to him. He summarized the lesson by writing, “No one ever told me that him. He summarized the lesson by writing, “No one ever told me that dehydration caused cowardice in its

more abject form.”

c. Poor diet and hygiene are common, if not inevitable, in combat, and tend to lower ones' energy level and sense of being alert and “human”. Low-grade environmental or stress-related illnesses further sap the soldiers' strength and confidence. Chronic diarrhea, the slight fever from malaria or virus, the skin infection that doesn't heal, can make soldiers easily exhausted and demoralized, setting them up for battle fatigue.

Keep Information Flowing

a. Keep the troops well-informed of their goals, the situation, and how they are doing. Do not conceal unpleasant possibilities, but put dangers in the perspective of how the team will overcome them. Do not give unrealistic reassurances, since failure of expected support increases battle fatigue.

Closing Statement

In combat, battle fatigue is inevitable, but battle fatigue casualties are not. History shows that highly trained and cohesive units have had fewer than one such casualty for every ten wounded in action, even in very heavy fighting. This is significantly less than the usual one per four or five. By knowing what factors in the tactical and overall situation increase battle fatigue, leaders, buddies and the individual soldier can take action to share the burden, resolve the internal conflict of motives and reduce the stress. By tough, realistic training which builds confidence, and by caring for each other in combat, we can overcome the stressors of the AirLand Battlefield.